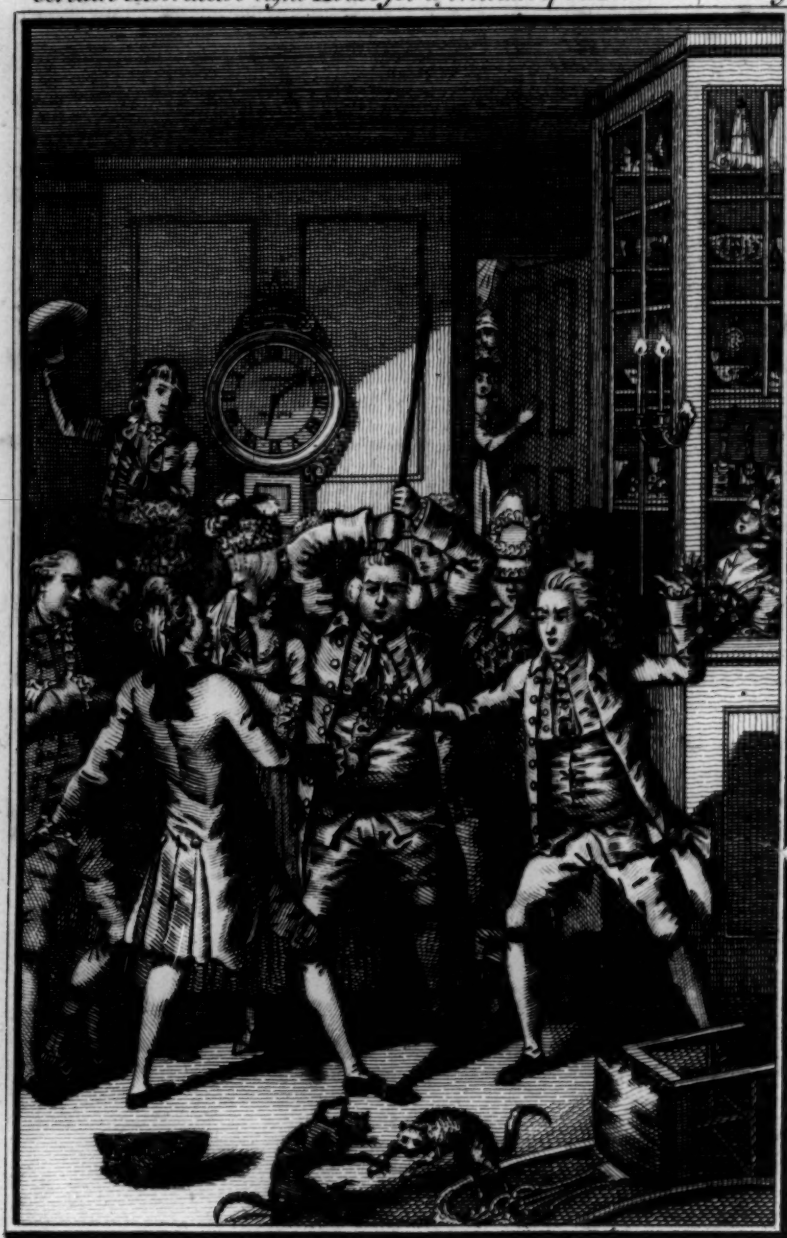


FRONTISPIECE.

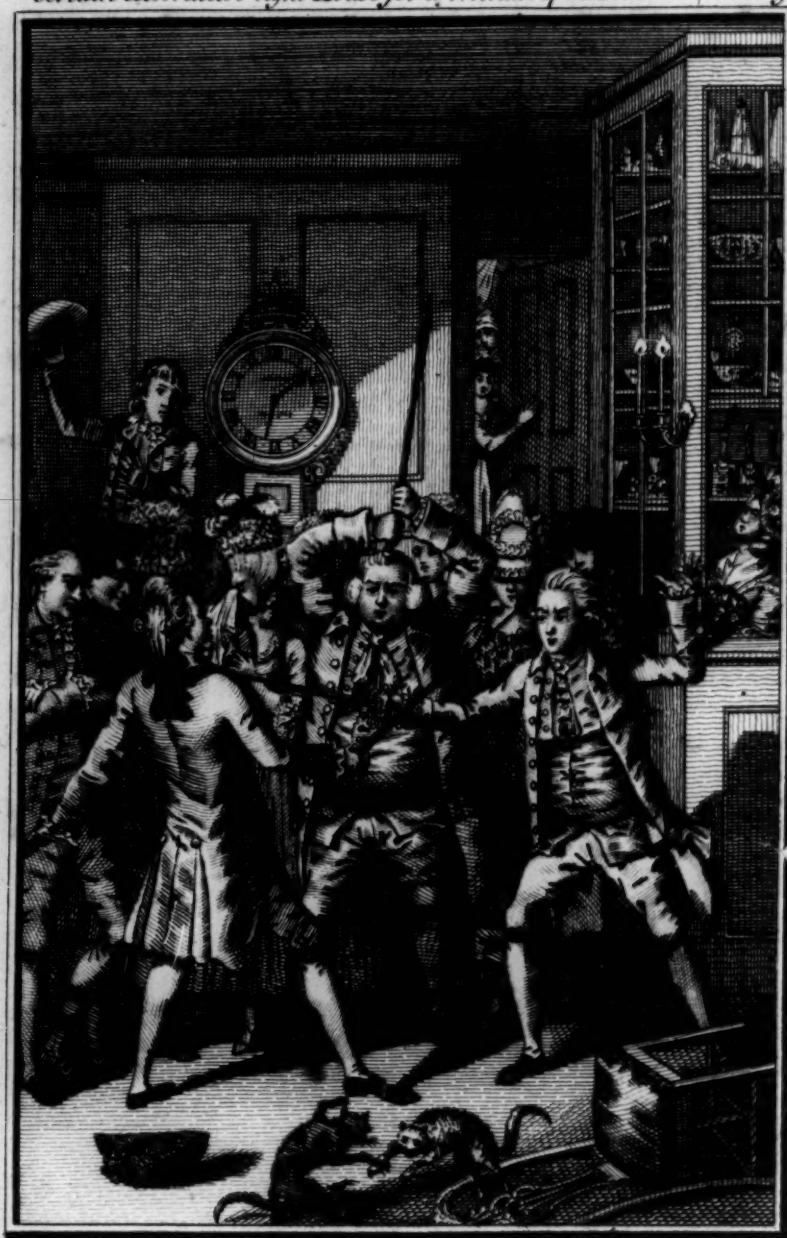
Two married Men, well known near S^t Paul's, fighting a Duel, at a certain celebrated Night-House for a Woman of the Town. — See Page 82.



*Rakes for false pleasures often quit their Wives,
 Destroy their Honor, and Expose their Lives:
 These and all other Scenes OUR SPY Displays,
 Sees—hears—observes—and tells what he Surveys.*

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Numeries,
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Revised, corrected, and improved, by RICHARD KING, Esq.

Author of *The New Frauds of London Detected*.

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Milk and messily nottices
brought me here.

This is a fire Dr. Leake
can't extinguish.

Bring Coopers fire rype, or
we shall be burnt.

Let me alone for extinguishing
a flame.

It is what you must
all come to

Don't fear - Those born to be
hang'd will never be
burnt.

The Bagnio in flames . .



THE
P R E F A C E.

THE capital cities of most countries are generally deemed a representation, in a small compass, of the country itself; but London is universally allowed to be an epitome of the whole universe; consequently, a candid and minute review of the inhabitants of this immense metropolis, with a scrutiny into their customs, manners and passions, will present the readers with the *World in Miniature*. We shall, therefore, venture to call this treatise the *Book of Life*, in which the secret springs of the actions of mankind

iv P R E F A C E.

are traced to their fountain-head ; and the rays of human knowledge are drawn into one focus.

If the assertion of the most elegant poet that ever adorned our language with his compositions is true, that

“ The proper study of mankind is Man,” it must be confessed, that London is the best academy for the study of life ; as the student may daily “ catch the manners living as they rise ;” and, form his conclusions from the interested motives which actuate the welfare, and are, in effect, the principles of action and the springs of human life.

In London, the gradations of life may be regularly traced, from splendid misery, to mirth in rags ; from the peaceless throne, to the powerless cottage ; from the lofty palace of magnificence, to the subterraneous cavern of penury. In high and low life we find the same prepossessions variously modulated, the same sentiments dressed in several garbs ; and the same passions differently express'd.

All

P R E F A C E.

All make, or wish to make, wealth their object; pleasure their business, and happiness their end; but how few attain those purposes! Wealth is miss'd of by vain prodigality or mean parsimony; pleasure is overwhelmed in excess, and happiness is lost in the anxiety of the pursuit.

“ For all the good that individuals find,

“ Or God, and nature meant to meet
mankind,

“ Reason's whole pleasures, all the joys
of sense,

“ Lie in three words: *health, peace, and
competence.*

In a review of life, we shall sometimes find virtue cloathed in rags, and villainy strutting in lace; from the reflections on which, some have absurdly presumed to arraign providence, when the frailties of disposition alone are to blame. Virtue has its follies, as well as Vice its crimes; the good man may be indolent or indiscreet, though not criminal; and the bad man may be penetrating and prudent, without possessing a single excellence

vi P R E F A C E.

lence to dignify the heart, or adorn the head. Many, by mistaking effects for causes, lose themselves in attempting to investigate human actions; and fancy, from the external appearance, they can see the secret spring; when nothing but a minute study of the passions, can let them into the Arcana of the heart.

In books, we may trace the historical chain of events, from the creation, to the present time; but a metropolis only can present us with the *Library of Life*. By studying the œconomy of a great city, we may peruse the human passions with the greatest expedition; read the customs with pleasure, and become speedy proficient in the knowledge of nature;—a knowledge which, alone, can enable us to pass through the world with propriety, to do justice to ourselves and others, and to give a pleasing taste to what a celebrated nobleman calls the *nauseous draught of life*, that it may afford satisfaction while we swallow it.

Life is justly compared to the ocean, and the passions, to the winds of Heaven; the
first

P R E F A C E. vii

first is sometimes smooth, and sometimes rough; and the latter is sometimes serene and placid, and often turbulent and restless; the skill of the pilot, therefore, who guides the helm of the ship of life, is to know how in the best weather, to prepare against the attacks of the worst; and to understand in the worst weather, how to stem the tide and evade the storm.

In this work we mean to investigate all characters;—virtue will be the object of our applause, and vice of our censure; innocence shall find a shield, and guilt a dagger; we shall bare the mean heart that lurks beneath a star; and, at the same time, where we find the object deserving, cast a glory round the meanest habit.

We shall conclude this Preface with some beautiful observations on human life, written by one of the first characters in this country.

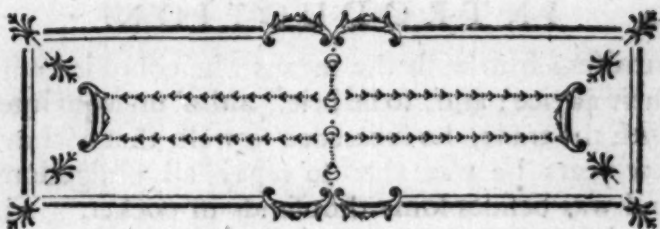
“ Pleasure but cheats us with any empty name,
“ Still seems to vary, yet is still the same;
“ Amusement, all its utmost skill can boast,
“ By use it lessens, and in thought is lost.

The

viii P R E F A C E.

- " The Youth that riots, and the Age that
 hoards,
 " Folly that sacrifices things to words ;
 " Pride, Wit and Beauty, in one taste agree,
 " 'Tis sensual, or 'tis mental, luxury.
 " Sad state of nature, doom'd to fruitless pain,
 " Something to wish and want, but never gain !
 " Restless we live, and disappointed die ;
 " Unhappy, yet we know not how or why.
 " Reason, perhaps, may lend her gen'rous aid,
 " Reason, that never yet her trust betray'd,
 " Can she direct us in the doubtful strife ?
 " Can she advise us in the maze of life ?
 " Is human reason then from weakness free ?
 " Partakes she not of our infirmity ?
 " Can she apply, with never-failing art,
 " The healing balsam to the wounded part ?
 " Correct those errors which the passions cause,
 " And teach the will to follow wisdom's laws ?
 " Alas ! experience but too plainly shews,
 " That man can act against the good he knows !
 " By custom led, or by allurements won,
 " Discern those evils which he cannot shun.
 " *Knowledge of Life* alone can safety give,
 " And all our *Study*, should be how *to live*.

A MODERN



A

MODERN DISPLAY

OF THE

Present Nocturnal and Diurnal Transactions

O F

LONDON and WESTMINSTER.

* H *

HAVING already given the reader an idea of the design of this work, it now only remains to say a few words relative to myself, before I proceed with my narration. —

I was born in the heart of the city of London, where my father was a capital tradesman; but having met with misfortunes in business and lost my mother, who died in childbed of a second son, he retired into Somersetshire with me, then an infant, designing to live upon what he had saved out of his shattered fortune in a frugal but decent manner.

Some friends of his, however, who resided in that part of the country to which he had withdrawn, advised him to go to Bristol, and engage in partnership in an extensive manufactory; they

B

furnished

furnished him with the means ; he complied with their advice ; and, to be brief, altho' unacquainted with the trade, he succeeded so well, that within a few years he was able to repay all obligations, and was besides some thousands in pocket. The good success he had, gave him an idea of making my education more extensive than he had at first intended, as it was always his maxim, that children should be brought up according to the line of life which they are most likely to fall into.

Being yet but what we term a middle-aged man, my father was persuaded into a second match, which turned out to his advantage in point of fortune. My mother-in-law, however, who was a London lady, was fond of pleasure, and thus in some measure altered the conduct of her husband's house. Among other things, she insisted on coming up once a year to the metropolis, whereby I had several opportunities of visiting my native place, of which I should otherwise have had no more idea than I had of Kamtschatka. Thus the time passed on, till death took away my father ; my mother-in-law soon followed him, and I was left alone in the world, but not unprovided for. Having paid a decent tribute to the memory of my parents, I looked into my affairs, which I found flourishing beyond my expectations. As trade had been propitious on the whole to my father, I resolved to pursue it ; I did so till I got what I thought a competency, and then, unwilling to hazard more, I had the good luck to withdraw with fortune and credit.

It was my intention to settle in the country ; but, according to the manner in which I had been bred, to come occasionally up to the capital, of which I had not yet seen so much as I desired.

And

And for this reason I resolved, upon my first excursion, to make a complete tour of London, with a detail of which, I shall bring the reader acquainted in the following sheets.

I set out in the Bristol stage-coach, in the month of November, 1780, and arrived at my journey's end, (without meeting with any accident,) in the usual time. I quitted the coach at Knightsbridge, in order to inquire after a relation of my father's, who, as I understood, resided there, and an elderly gentleman, who had been very communicative while we were on the road, having some business to do at that place, proved an agreeable companion. After going through the usual ceremonies of a night spent at an inn, I sent early the next morning to make the proper inquiries, but found that my kinsman had followed my parents to *the house appointed for all living*, which excited, as is usual, some melancholy reflexions on mortality.

The old gentleman perceiving me pensive, endeavoured to divert me by several innocent sallies of humour; and having transacted his business, proposed to accompany me to the Green-Park coffee house. I accepted his offer, and we jogged on together; I acquainted him with my design, and he approved of my journey of observation.

"I would gladly, said he, be your companion in this home tour, but that I am a person well known in London; and there are some places in which I could not be seen without giving occasion for talking to a busy world; but, as we are going to the Green-Park coffee-house, (looking at his watch), I believe we shall arrive there time enough to meet a friend of mine taking his morning's

16 HISTORY OF Mr. AMBLER.

chocolate, to whom I can recommend you. I am sure he will chearfully consent to be your conductor; and that you may know something of the companion I intend you, I will make you acquainted with the outlines of his history."

"Mr. Ambler was born at Stratford upon Avon, in Warwickshire, in a house near that which gave birth to our immortal poet Shakespeare. His father and mother became united, not because they loved each other, but because the estates to which they were heirs, happened to lie contiguous. For this, and some other considerations equally important, their parents had the adjoining lands and some money in the stocks, belonging to both parties, regularly married; the young couple were sacrifices to the wedding, and obliged to cohabit together in order to consummate the unnatural nuptials.

"The consequence of this pecuniary marriage, was a continual disgust on both sides. Mr. Ambler the elder had all the perverse qualities of a mule; and his wife was not deficient in the spirit of contradiction. Hence frequent bickerings ensued; but the lady, however, became pregnant.

"When the boy was born, innocent as he was, he became the subject of altercation; and many curious disputes happened concerning the mode of bringing him up. These lasted 'till young Francis, for that was the name they gave him, arrived at seven years of age.

"A dispute now took place concerning his education, and was carried on with some warmth; a cessation of altercation, at length, took place; and it was determined to place him at a boarding school, that he might receive the rudiments of literature,

literature, from the wisdom and care of the Rev. Dr. Birch. He was accordingly taken to the academy of that learned gentleman, and placed under his care; but before the parents left the place, they took an opportunity, respectively, to harangue the master, and lay him under certain injunctions.

“Mr. Ambler, senior, conveyed his sentiments to Dr. Birch in the following address:

“Sir, you must comprehend that I know the world, and understand things better than my wife, who is, to speak the truth of her, a very conceited person, and a perverse woman; nay, in fact, Sir, she is perverseness itself, therefore you must not regard what she says: I will have my son educated my own way, Sir; so pray observe, Sir, that I am afraid his disposition too much resembles his mother’s, too much indeed; on which account I would have you beat him often; don’t spare him, Sir, you know the old proverb—*Spare the rod and spoil the child*; it will cure him of obstinacy, it will cure him of that perverse disposition he inherits from his mother. Then, Sir, make him get up soon, I hate that a boy should be lazy; and stint him a little in food, fasting improves the understanding and renders the temper tame, ’twill do him good, ’twill moderate the passions and keep him close to study, make him a good scholar; make him learn,—You comprehend me, Sir.”

The master promised an implicit obedience to these injunctions, and soon after was privately addressed by the wife in this manner:

“Sir, you must not mind what my husband says, he’s an obstinate man, a mule, Sir, a perfect mule, a downright perverse creature; and as for me, I’m quite of a mild temper. But you

18 HISTORY OF Mr. AMBLER.

must educate my son, Sir, according to my pleasure and my plan ; you must not notice my husband's directions, he's an insignificant, obstinate man, therefore, Sir, as the child is of a mild disposition, like me, never beat him, Sir, never beat him ; I'm sure he'll never deserve it, for he's exceedingly mild. You must know, Sir, that *you spoil the child if you don't spare the rod* ; indulgence breeds emulation, and emulation makes scholars. Be kind to my child, for it was harsh usage made my husband obstinate ; and obstinate I'll assure you he is ; nay he is obstinacy itself, Sir. But I desire, after all, that my son may be used tenderly, I have brought him up in that manner, and would have it continued. Yes, Sir, I shall desire that you will let him lie as long as he pleases in a morning ; his constitution is delicate, he must not be disturbed too soon. Besides, I would not have him too industrious, it will appear like being a mechanic ; no, no, let him possess a little genteel indolence. But above all things, Sir, never stint him in food, children should not be stinted, let them have their fill and they'll grow finely ; besides, they'll learn the better for eating well, a full belly makes a full head. You know likewise, Sir, that hunger will eat through stone walls and make the temper furious, impatient and obdurate ; — You conceive, Sir ?”

“ Perfectly, Madam,” replied the pedagogue ; and after having answered both parties with great politeness and precision, they departed well satisfied that they had outwitted each other.

“ As soon as the parents were gone, the master forgot the contradictory instructions they had given, and immediately put young Ambler under the common regulations of the school, by which means

HISTORY OF Mr. AMBLER. 19

means he was better used than he would have been if his father's instructions had been followed, and became a better scholar than if his mother's documents had been pursued.

"Ape-like, fond parents act extremely ill,
"And whom they love, with their embraces kill."

In an altercation between Mr. Ambler, senior, and his wife, soon after it was determined by both to write to the master concerning their favorite sciences. The debate related to the superior utility of geography and dancing. The gentleman was in favor of geography, the lady of dancing; in consequence of which the following laconic epistles, were written to Dr. Birch, by both parties respectively

"SIR,
"Teach my son geography, that he may
"know how to travel through the world; but
"let him not attend to dancing, for a man looks
"like a monkey when tripping about a room.
"ANDREW AMBLER."

"SIR,
"Let my son learn dancing, that he may be
"able to move gracefully; but let him not study
"geography, lest he should have a rambling
"desire to see strange countries, and either be
"lost in the ocean, or devoured by cannibals.
"MARY AMBLER."

These letters made no farther impression on Dr. Birch, than to induce him to comply with both requests, and teach him both geography and dancing.

Thus, by the contradiction of the parents, the son became perfectly well accomplished, and gained more from the mutual contention of both, than

20 HISTORY of a MAN of the TOWN.

than he could have done by the partial fondness of either.

“ At length young Ambler was removed to the university, where he acted like other students, viz. kept late hours, swore a little, gamed much, intrigued with his bed-maker, and ran in debt with his vintner; but time corrected his error.

“ Mr. Ambler, senior, becoming insolvent, through his own imprudence and the extravagance of his wife, the young gentleman was forced to leave the university before he had taken any degree, on account of the lowness of his finances.

“ On coming first to London, he studied the law; but not finding that profession agreeable either to his conscience, or his principles of honor, he forsook it for physic; which, in a short time, proved equally disagreeable; for the benevolence of his temper was such, that he could not bear to see his fellow creatures in misery, without being certain of giving them relief.

“ Mr. Ambler's next attempt was on the stage, in which state of life he thought to qualify and bring under command, his natural passions, by the representation of those which were artificial. After practising this employment for some time, he found many things amiss, and in particular condemned pantomime as absurd; but, in order to make people think as well as see, at the representation of a pantomime, he endeavoured, in an ingenious address, to prove that it might be considered as a sentimental comedy, which gained him great applause.—

“ A lady of a competent, though not considerable fortune, who saw Mr. Ambler in the character of Archer, in the *Beaux Stratagem*, conceived a partial affection for him; which he was
given

GREEN PARK COFFEE-HOUSE. 21

given to understand by a particular friend. The prepossession in his favour easily gained him admission to the presence of the lady; the interview was productive of an eclairsissement, and the latter terminated in a marriage.

“ The lady, within a twelvemonth after her marriage, died in child-birth; and Mr. Ambler, for some time, gave himself up to the pangs of melancholy. At length, however, reason overcame dissatisfaction, and hope banished the thoughts of despair. He took the resolution to travel, in order to be diverted from the usual objects of his attention; the remedy succeeded, and he returned perfectly well acquainted with the world.”

By this time we were pretty near the place of our destination; the little history just recited, having filled up the time till our arrival in sight of the Green Park coffee-house.

As it was at an early hour, and this was the very extremity of the town, my companion told me that little was to be expected of observation here. “ Luckily, however, said he, yonder sits Mr. Ambler; I will go up and speak to him; and, in the mean time, you may remark on that young spark with the dish of coffee before him, who seems far more attentive to his pocket-glass, than to his morning’s draught. I will tell you more of him presently.”

As he said this, he walked up to his friend; whilst I turned my eyes towards a figure which appeared almost of the doubtful gender. It was a young person dressed in a most effeminate manner, with a high head, large white hat, buttons of various colours on his cloaths, which were of silk, adorned with tassels, and knotted with ribbands; he had a sword by his side, steel hilted
and

22 GREEN PARK COFFEE-HOUSE.

and inlaid, which seemed calculated for ornament rather than use; and his handkerchief breathed perfumes too strong for many constitutions to endure; sometimes he would take up the newspaper, then throw it down with a careless air; and casting a supercilious look upon the company, return to his glass, as his best companion; by his gestures sufficiently testifying, that he was abundantly satisfied with his own sweet person.

The old gentleman, returning, asked me what I thought of him? I replied, that I took him to be the coxcombical son of some person of quality. "No, said he, he is the son of an eminent pawnbroker in the city, whose father, knowing his extravagant disposition, would give him nothing in his life-time; but, dying intestate, he came in for above 5000l, the greater part of which he soon dissipated, wasting his weak constitution upon wine and women. A famous match-maker, however, recommended him, about a year since, to the notice of a buxom widow, who had long kept a capital inn in the country. Charmed with an appearance which some of the sex would despise, she bestowed herself and her fortune upon him without reserve. Her return was first indifference, afterwards, ill usage and desertion; which, most people think, brought on her an incurable malady, of which she languished till she died. And now, released from all ties, he is going on in the former way, to dissipate his remaining fortune, with only this remarkable difference: that wine having proved his enemy, he is more moderate in the use of it; and finding himself little fit for the combats of Venus, he has transferred his pretended love for the fair sex, to a most immoderate admiration of his own person, which he
spares

spares no pains to deck with every effeminate ornament that the times can afford, or his own childish fortune induce him to purchase.

“Opposite to him you will see a strong contrast: there is a sea-officer who has grown old in the service of his country, and has yet attained to no higher degree than that of a lieutenant. See how he bites his nails and frowns upon this Adonis. Such will ever be the fate of merit unsupported in every country.—But Mr. Ambler is coming, so you will excuse me for the present; I shall leave you to yourselves.”

I should have been sorry for the departure of the old gentleman, but that his friend coming up at this time, introduced himself very aptly to my company, and soon proved himself the man of penetration and understanding.

As he was already possessed of my design, he readily offered himself as my conductor; and as he observed it was sometimes proper to enter the “house of mourning,” proposed paying a visit to St. George's Hospital, where he said an old servant of his father's had long been confined by illness. I readily consented, and we went thither; accordingly the person in question we heard was gone out; and, though no surgeons, for once we resolved to “walk the hospital”. In one of the wards we perceived a meagre figure walking about with one of his arms tied in a sling. He seemed about fifty years of age, disease appeared to have made great havock on his person, and sorrow was seated in his countenance; we entered into conversation with him, when he gave us the following account of himself:—

“I was bred to the law, and left young with a decent competency, when I entered into business for myself. Instead of losing my integrity by my practice,

24 ST. GEORGE'S HOSPITAL.

practice, I in a short time became disgusted with my profession, and determined to quit a line of life which I could not continue in agreeable to my conscience, without sacrificing common honesty to its various chicaneries. I bought a commission, and went into the army, where during the last war I particularly distinguished myself in several memorable engagements; my situation, however, became irksome, and I was disliked by my brother officers, who shunned my company on account of my wanting the *necessary accomplishments*. They indeed allowed me courage, skill, and assiduity with respect to discipline; but I was still incomplete, and not an officer's companion, for these reasons; my heart would not suffer me to debauch a girl, and boast of it; my tongue abhorred toasting a beauty, and giving a significant wink in order to intimate an intrigue, and ruin her reputation; I could not drink hard, hated gaming, and detested swearing; for these sagacious reasons I was deemed a sorry fellow, a man without soul, without life, a mere milk-sop; and for such my deficiencies was excluded the company of my brother officers, as an *ignominium*. This contemptible treatment at length roused my passions; I quarrelled with one of the officers for his impertinence, a challenge was sent, and a duel ensued. I disarmed my antagonist, who acted with great pusillanimity; when the rest of the officers of the regiment coolly observed, it was a thousand pities that I could not whore, drink, and game, as well as I could fight. They allowed that I had blood, but wanted spunk and spirit; it was therefore unanimously agreed to class me as an insipid.

“ At the close of the war I sold my commission, in order to be freed from a disagreeable predicament,

ment, in which it was necessary to become half a rogue, and quite a rake, in order to fit myself for the military company.

"I then made a transition from arms to arts, and studied chemistry, where instead of discovering the philosopher's stone, I discovered that crucibles were a sinking fund to my pocket, and that my money daily diminished by evaporating away in hermetical smoke.

"Being roused from my golden phrenzy of transmutation, I scraped together the small remains of my fortune, and turned merchant, thinking that lucrative gains in this kind of business, might prove honorable and easy. I shipped my whole substance in an adventure to America, just after the troubles in that country commenced. My evil genius, however, still pursued me; the ship was taken by an American privateer, and my total ruin was the consequence.

"Bold were the men, who on the ocean first

"Spread their new sails when shipwrecks were
the worst;

"More danger new from man alone can find,

"Than from the rocks, the billows, and the
wind."

"Stagnated at first by my calamities, I was for some time stupified; but recovering to a sense of reflection, my situation overpowered my faculties, and I fell into a violent fever, which consumed what little pittance I had previously preserved.

"On the recovery of my health, I applied to several whom I had imagined to be cordial friends, but the success of my application proved them to be only formal acquaintances. Several of them had partaken of the sun-shine of my prosperity, but avoided dissipating the clouds of my decline. They only administered the worst of comfort,
C
pity,

26 ST. GEORGE'S HOSPITAL.

pity, instead of pecuniary assistance; and were sorry for my misfortunes, without affording me the least relief.

“At length I met with an old acquaintance, who had tasted of the bitter cup of calamity himself; he felt for me, because adversity had taught him humanity. He gave me a few shillings, they were all he could spare. I received them with heart-felt gratitude, and resolved to endeavour all in my power to find the means of procuring a decent livelihood; being convinced that it is always laudable in a man to adopt any trade or profession, rather than to be a burden to his friends or the community.

“As I had received a liberal education, I made no doubt but that I might get my bread by my pen. My design was to offer myself as a clerk; for this purpose, I at first applied at one of the register offices; but I soon found myself only trifled with. At last, however, meeting with another old friend, to whom I made my case known, he recommended me to a lottery-office keeper, whom I waited on immediately, and agreed with him at eighteen shillings per week for a certain time. This would have been, in a manner, an estate to me; and I went homewards that evening in high spirits. Whether it were that my mind was too much busied with the consideration of my approaching good fortune, or from what other reason I know not, but crossing the way in Picadilly, without proper attention, my foot slipped, and I fell under a coach which ran over me, and broke my arm. Some humane persons conveyed me to this hospital, where I have ever since remained; had there been no institution of this nature, most probably I must have perished.—This, gentlemen, is the sum of my story;

story; I have seen much of life, and much of sorrow. The result is, that I have learned not to be too much elated with success; and above all, never to despair in any situation."

The resignation and temper of this unhappy person charmed us both, and after each of us had presented him with a small sum for the purchase of wine or other comforts, not provided for convalescents by the charity, we took our leave of him, and visited several other wards, in some of which we saw beings, who, by their own crimes or folly, had reduced themselves to a deplorable situation; in others, persons whom the afflicting hand of Heaven had marked out for misfortunes. Many seemed to wait for their dissolution as a blessing; yet

"Over them triumphant Death his dart

"*Shook*; but delay'd to strike."

The scene growing too affecting, we departed, not without heaving a sigh, and dropping a tear due to nature and humanity.

As we walked along, my friend observed that these institutions were highly deserving of praise, but, like many others, required some few regulations, and a more strict regard to be paid to the internal government of them, which was generally left too much in the hands of mercenary servants, who were apt to attend solely to their own interest, too careless of the welfare of the patients, and the original design of the charity.

Having left the hospital, we proceeded through

The GREEN-PARK, sometimes called
CONSTITUTION-HILL,

On account of the salubrious air which is there found. A number of deer were formerly kept

28 ST. JAMES'S PALACE.

here, but I perceived most of them had been removed, and various alterations made on this spot, as well as in St. James's Park, from which it can hardly be said to be separated. Mr. Ambler stopped a moment to cast a glance upon

The QUEEN'S PALACE;

This was formerly called Buckingham-house as I remember, and seems to have been built (though on a small scale) in the style of Cliefden-house, the seat of the great Villars; and as Pope observes, "The bower of wanton Shrewsbury and love."

This manner of building has, it seems, proved so very agreeable to our sovereign, that he has not only purchased the edifice we are contemplating for his Queen, but has made some considerable offers for Cliefden-house, in order to convert it into a royal palace. The latter seems indeed to be a much more desirable residence than the former; I was agreeably surprised at the change which had taken place in St. James's Park; I thought the damp marshy inclosure, commonly called *the Island*, well exchanged for an extensive lawn, the palisadoes round which serve likewise to prevent many of those indecencies and irregularities, which were become a nuisance in the very neighbourhood of royalty. It besides formed a place of encampment, as I found in the time of the late riots. Passing by

St. JAMES'S PALACE,

Mr. Ambler could not help lamenting that our monarchs were not better accommodated, a circumstance which brought to his mind an old saying of the French and Italians, "That our hospitals and prisons were constructed like palaces, whilst our palaces were like prisons or hospitals."

We

HORSE-GUARDS, &c. 29

We did not quit the park till we came to the

HORSE-GUARDS,

A building well contrived, and which has a very good effect. Crossing the way, I could not help surveying with pleasure that chaste and noble structure the banquetting-house, now

WHITEHALL CHAPEL,

The last relick of a once glorious palace. "This, (said I), was the residence of former kings. — Here Charles I. unhappily met his fate, and here his son rioted in luxury. But this edifice, once made use of only for revels, is now dedicated to sacred purposes." As it was prayer-time, we walked in, and stayed till service was over. When we went out, I took notice of the beauty of the cieling; my friend could not help observing, that this (though impossible to remove) was an *inconvenience* to be lamented. "I am no great friend (said he) to paintings in churches and chapels; but if there are any, I could wish them at least to be representations of something serious and religious. What you admire was well adapted to a banquetting-house, but it is certainly improper in a place of divine worship."

As we crossed over from hence, my attention was directed to a more modern building, of a different structure, where I saw several persons in uniforms, and otherwise habited, entering in haste; and immediately recollected it to be

The ADMIRALTY,

"This is a place (said my friend) where there is generally a great bustle in war-time; some resorting thither to *pass*, and many more waiting for promotion. This may in some sense be styled the Palladium of our country, since on

30 A FASHIONABLE GAMESTER.

the resolves of the admiralty-board depend so much of the glory and happiness of Britain. In some things they may be controled by a higher power; but the highest-power often properly yields to their professional knowledge. But do you see that young spark in the laced cloaths, who has just stepped out of a chariot, that was prevented by the stoppage of carriages from coming up? Would you not think he had some great business here?" I answered in the affirmative. "You are quite deceived, (replied my companion), he has nothing to do with naval affairs; but having, by means of a good effrontery, got some slight knowledge of the Earl of S——, he thus attends on him as he does at the levee, of many, with whom he has no business but what he *makes* occasionally, and from whom one would imagine he could not have any expectations. As to his own character in life, it is uncertain. He was born in Ireland, as he says, of very genteel parents; however that may be, if he had any fortune, he lavished it away, and came over to England as an adventurer. A countryman of his meeting him here by chance, when much reduced, furnished him with a temporary supply, and initiated him into the principles of gaming, as carried on at the politest places of resort by some of the greatest sc—ls on earth. As he had a good preceptor, and possessed a willing mind, he soon became an adept, and winning considerable sums, set up his carriage, and began to assume the airs of a person of quality, which he was the more enabled to do; by mixing with some of the first rank at Newmarket and other places. It is said he is now making his addresses to the sister of a person of great fortune, and some rank in life, whose brother

CHARING-CROSS, &c. 31

ther entertaining some scruples as to the young gentleman's real character and situation, he has for some time abstained from the gaming-table, (living on the fruits of former industry) and has doubled his assiduity in visiting great men in the manner above-mentioned, in order to preserve his consequence." Thus discoursing, we passed

NORTHUMBERLAND HOUSE,

Where a fire had lately made some devastation. My companion here made a few pertinent remarks on the splendour in which the family had long lived, which he said was an honour to their country, and their boundless generosity and charity, which had constantly done honour to their own spirit and humanity.

As we took our way through the Strand, we were tempted to go down

The ADELPHI BUILDINGS,

Where a new kind of architecture, of street upon street, and houses sunk three stories below the pavement, are displayed. "The idea (said my friend) was ingenious, and the plan upon the whole useful. This terrace, however, though in summer pleasant, is yet in winter-time, on account of the fogs from the river, a disagreeable, and, as I conceive, rather an unhealthy situation.

Returning through the Strand, we came to that beautiful range of offices, not yet finished, erected where the old palace, called

SOMERSET HOUSE,

Formerly stood, and for which that ruinous edifice was well exchanged. The increase of
buildings,

32 ANDERTON'S COFFEE-HOUSE.

buildings, as my friend well observed, was certainly productive of much good consequence in the great streets of London, though the rage for building in the suburbs had rather done harm than good of late years. In a commercial country, every thing that is to the benefit of trade should doubtless be encouraged, but all that tends to the increase of luxury should be most carefully avoided.

As we went through Fleet-street, Mr. Ambler proposed our calling in at

A N D E R T O N ' s ,

As we had seen nothing of the manners of a city coffee-house. At our entrance, as I imagined, my dress was a little remarked by some young fellows who sat near the door; I thought proper to withdraw to a farther box, from whence we could descant upon the company without being so much observed ourselves.

The first person that attracted my companion's notice, was a dull heavy looking man, very plainly dressed, who was drinking his coffee, and devouring some muffins, with great seeming satisfaction, only now and then stopping to look round upon the company, which he did with no small marks of contempt. Mr. Ambler informed me he was a citizen, who was generally tolerably well beloved by his neighbours till he became worth a *plum*, after which he grew insufferably insolent. Besides this, an œconomy that before seemed laudable, degenerated into the most sordid covetousness.—“ He was a married man, (continued my companion) and just at this juncture losing his wife, who was an amiable woman; he grew, to complete his character, a tyrannical father.

father. He stopped the education of his son, to save money, and abridged him of the necessaries of life. The youth passed his time so ill, that he begged to be put out apprentice to some trade; but his father grudged to give a premium, or even to find him in cloaths. His mother's brother, however, furnishing these articles, the lad was happily delivered, at last, from his penurious father's tyranny, who is hated by all that have the unhappiness to know him. Having left off his trade, he is turned usurer, and preys on the distresses of others. In the mean time, he almost grudges himself victuals and drink; but shews that he has an excellent appetite whenever, as is often the case, he can make the purses of others pay for what his craving stomach consumes. I dare say (added Mr. Ambler) he is now in waiting for somebody, whom he means to fleece." He had scarcely said these words, when a young man, of a genteel appearance, entered the coffee-room; and, on enquiring for Mr. Secure, was directed to the box where the usurer sat. The last mentioned person called for a dish of coffee, and, upon something being whispered in his ear, he paid the reckoning, and they withdrew, the room being by this time, I suppose, too full for them to transact their private business.

They were but just gone, when my attention was called to a gentleman who was haranguing on politics, to an old man that sat in the box with him, and, by his noisy eloquence, disturbing the company. Mr. Ambler informed me, this senator had once been an officer in Ireland; but having first much abused an Irish gentleman, then challenged, and, lastly, *forgetting* to meet him, his brother officers did *not forget* to shew him such marks of their resentment, in every public company,

34 EXAMPLE OF MODESTY, &c.

company, that he was obliged to sell his commission, and had lived by his wits (as the phrase is) ever since. It seemed, that being troublesome at the west end of the town, he had got himself turned out of the coffee-houses there by persons that knew him; since which, he had done the city the honour of his presence, and favoured them with his harangues, which he intruded upon every one, and meant to pass for a great orator, though, in fact, he was but a vain pretender to argument, and as destitute of eloquence, as he had shewn himself of courage. In fact, he was a vain-boaster, and frequently got himself disgraced accordingly. A tall person, in a military dress, just now entering, this figure of a man paid his reckoning, and stalked away, it seemed as if he feared to be known to this gentleman; and, with all his love of praise, like Captain Bobadil, “did not wish to be too popular.”

“But, observe that genteel young man, so plainly but neatly dressed (said Mr. Ambler), he is directly the contrast of the self-sufficient fellow that went out; bred with expectations of a fortune, and indulged in a liberal education, his parents coming to decay in the world, and his father dying while he was yet young, being ignorant of any trade, he scarcely knew how to gain a livelihood. At length, a person whom he had formerly known, in better days, offered to employ him as a clerk; he gladly accepted the proposal; but he had not been with his new employer above six months before he suddenly shut up his house, went off much in debt, and proved to be concerned in some swindling schemes, greatly to his discredit. Poor Ewson, (that is his name), not only lost thirty pounds, his due by agreement,

agreement, but was generally looked ill upon for having had such a connection, though, in truth, all the schemes of the house were unknown to him. Now again out of bread, and endued with too much modesty to be solicitous for employment, and too much spirit to be troublesome to any body, he was reduced to the greatest distress; whole days he passed almost without any sustenance, 'till one day, sitting in this room over a solitary dish of coffee, which was intended for his breakfast, dinner and supper, an elderly gentleman by chance fell into conversation with him, by degrees, extorted some account of his situation; and finding him, apparently, a sensible and worthy person, recommended him to a friend of his, an eminent banker in Lombard-street, whose head clerk he now is, and has, for some time, supported his aged mother out of his earnings; but a distant relation, who never would help the family in life, lately dying, a genteel fortune has fallen to him, which, from the tenor of his conduct, it is not doubted but he will improve to the best advantage."

As we were now rather crowded, having thanked my friend for his information, I made a motion to withdraw, which Mr. Ambler complied with, and we directed our course along Fleet-street, stopping a while, in our way, to contemplate

BLACK-FRIARS BRIDGE.

Here I observed, that the covering over that noisome place of stench, formerly called Fleet-ditch, and building a bridge, was certainly a great and laudable work; "true, said Mr. Ambler, but as to the bridge, though it has a
very

36 FLEET-PRISON and NEWGATE.

very handsome appearance, it is not without its inconveniencies. It has no shelter from the winter's storm, or summer's heat; it was seemingly intended as an improvement on the plan of Westminster bridge, but I can hardly consider it as such; and I must consider the toll exacted from foot-passengers, so long continued, as a disgrace to the city.

I could not but acknowledge the truth of these observations; and as I well remembered to have seen the bridge when first built, did not chuse to spend any time in advancing towards it; but on the contrary we directed our course through the heart of the city.

We turned aside, however, to observe the devastations committed by the populace at the

FLEET-PRISON and NEWGATE;

When my companion assured me, "that thirty armed men acting in a spirited manner, might have prevented this destruction; and a small force timely employed, might have entirely hindered the rioters from perpetrating their designs. On this occasion, I could not help expressing my detestation of those who dared to employ the sacred name of religion as a cloak for their wicked purposes. Mr. Ambler observed, "it was generally believed that not one of the Protestant Association, as they called themselves, had any hand in this matter, much less their leader." "But (said he) as this latter is a point which will be publicly discussed, we will drop it, and leave it with our superiors. I shall only observe, that the panic with which people were struck was amazing; and the conduct of a late city magistrate

contemplate those dungeons which have too long marked the reign of slavery in the very bosom of liberty."

Accordingly we went to No. 10, where upon enquiring for Mr. Lateman, we were admitted; Mr. Ambler observed, that it was easy to send for him into the lodge; but as my design was to take a view of the prison, we might as well meet him there. To this I consented, and immediately a person on the inside of the gate vociferated for Mr. Lateman. Mr. Lateman the RAT? do you want? cried a female. No, Mr. Lateman the DEBTOR, was the reply. I now took the liberty of asking the reason of the former demand, when I was told, that men taken up for assaults or night-brawls were termed RATs, and the harlots or women in a similar situation, were there called MICE, and at locking up hours, crammed into a hole accordingly.

The weighty doors turning slow on their creaking hinges; we were at length admitted into the interior part of this building, which one should have thought as one of our modern authors has expressed it to be "Sacred to the Genius of sorrow."

For my own part, I must confess that entering the infernal regions could scarcely have struck me with more dread; yet as soon as I came into the yard, I saw several persons walking backwards and forwards with no visible concern in their countenances; and looking a little farther to the right, observed numbers of ragged wretches very busily employed in gaming.

When Mr. Ambler's friend appeared, who was a middle-aged man, he saluted us very genteelly, and would have gone back to the lodge, but that my companion in a whisper (as I supposed) gave him an idea of my view and intentions. What confirmed

confirmed me in this supposition was, his immediately proposing to shew us the different mansions of this house of woe; and first, he took us to the common side, where, after passing a gate that separated it from the yard, we entered a sort of dark hall, where we saw some people eating and drinking with little seeming concern. The smell of the place was almost intolerable. I observed, the beds of such as had any, were placed in ranges, as our shelves, over each other; and those who had none, were obliged to lie upon the boards. We did not stay long here, but were soon conducted to another ward, where prisoners might have beds provided them, and ranged much in the same slovenly and unwholesome manner for fifteen pence per week. The women also had a ward separate from the men; but all persons taken up for night assaults, as we were told, were liable to be mixed with thieves in the strong room, unless they paid for a chamber to themselves, in which case there was a range of rooms allotted for them; the price 2s. per night before, and 1s. per night after commitment. "Before I shew you the master's side, where debtors are accommodated with separate rooms for their money (said Mr. Latteman) if you please I will conduct you to the regions below; and so saying, he led us down a flight of stairs to a dark room under the chapel, which I should rather have taken for a dungeon than a drinking room. Here candles were used at noon-day, which the customers paid for, the landlord of the tap not furnishing any but on such conditions; and here debtors and felons were in a manner mixed together, a circumstance which struck me as a great impropriety. The few windows here were shattered, and the panes that were whole, covered with dust; the place was full

of ill smells, and every inconvenience that man could conceive. "I see (said my guide, addressing himself to me) that you seem surpris'd at finding a place so little adapted for the purpose, yet even here there is scarcely an evening passes but the room resounds with mirth." I asked if we could have any thing to drink, on which the landlord answered in the affirmative; and on calling for a bottle of wine, led me into a room behind the bar, which was a little more convenient, and where we saw some persons tolerably well dressed taking their morning's draught, apparently with as much composure as if they had been at the tavern. I thought the liquor was very indifferent, which I observed to Mr. Ambler's friend as we quitted the room, adding, that I supposed it was always so here; he replied, it was in general. "But, said he, we once had a landlord who married a relation of the keeper, that lighted up this dismal tap-room at his own expence, made the place we sat in convenient, and furnished his guests with the best of wines and other liquors; but he *trusted*, contrary to the custom of the place, by which, and other extravagances, (added he seriously) the poor man *got himself into a gaol*." I could not help smiling at the expression, which our guide perceiving observed, that a removal from a prison where a man was known, was a very disagreeable circumstance.

Thus conversing, he led us to the master's side, where we were to finish our survey. Here we saw several spacious rooms, but so entirely out of repair, that except for the privilege of a person having a chamber to himself, they seem'd little desirable, there being but a bed, a grate, a table, and a chair in the most of them.

MR.

Mr. Lateman now conducted us to his apartment, which by the help of neatness, and some articles of his own furniture, made a more decent appearance than the rest of them. Here he entertained us with some little anecdotes of the prison, and a few short histories of some of its inhabitants; but as they mostly contained only a relation of extravagance or misery too commonly known, few of them could much entertain the reader. "The old man (says he) that sat next Mr. Ambler, is an eternal talker, as you might observe. He was once a capital tradesman: it is his boast that he neglected his business, to mix with the men of fashion at Newmarket, and to spend his time in gaming, till his extravagance at last by degrees reduced him from a state of affluence to the lowest distress; and he is now, with all his pride, so poor, that he is in constant fear of being turned over to the common side for not paying his weekly rent. The person with whom he was conversing, has long since settled the debt for which he was arrested, and he now is a prisoner for his fees, to prevent other matters from coming against him. He is frequently out of doors, especially on a Sunday; yet his name I am told remains on the books as a prisoner.

While he was thus discoursing, we were alarmed with a noise in the yard, when descending from the chamber to see what occasioned it, we found a stout fellow engaged with the turnkey, the constable of the prison, and some others, who having overpowered him, put him into the black hole for having got drunk, struck a debtor, and committed other faults. This, Mr. Lateman observed, was necessary to keep such fellows in order; adding, that in some cases, they were immediately removed to Newgate.

42 HISTORY OF A DEBTOR.

Having now finished our survey, we departed ; and I could not help taking notice of the ruinous situation of the prison, which seemed ready to fall upon the heads of its wretched inhabitants. I thought the number here confined was great ; but it must decrease, as the practice of arresting, for small debts, is abolished. In effect, as Mr. Ambler remarked, arrests have often been found cruel, and generally ineffectual ; since the rogue would not pay, if he did not chuse it, and it must be barbarous to imprison an honest man, and foolish to run the risque of maintaining any one in confinement.

We now took our leave of this communicative prisoner, when Mr. Ambler gave me some particulars of his story, the sum of which was : That he was the younger son of a gentleman of fortune, who being displeased with him for marrying beneath himself, as he conceived, though he made choice of a worthy woman of genteel deportment, intirely forsook him, and left him to shift for himself in the world. In consequence of this desertion, he had recourse to various employments, making it his chief happiness to maintain his beloved wife. “ But, about a year since, added my friend, she expired in child-bed ; when Mr. Lateman, struck with grief, fell into a violent fit of sickness ; this occasioned his being discharged from a place where he acted as clerk to a capital house ; it also caused him to contract some debts, for one of which he was arrested and brought hither, just as he had recovered from his illness ; being, however, one of those few who rise from misfortunes, instead of sinking under them, he has subsisted, since his arrival here, by writing essays for the public prints ; and what has turned out still more lucky for him, the person
that

that first offered his services to get him that little employment, has since recommended him to a bookseller in the city, who has employed him on a work of consequence, and has consented to advance the money on his note, to pay debt and costs, and set him at liberty."

We were now come within sight of that well-known edifice,

GUILD-HALL,

Where so much business, of various kinds, is transacted for the benefit of the citizens of London, where various courts are held, and, among the rest, that vulgarly called the Court of Conscience; this court is arbitrary enough indeed, sometimes, in its determinations; yet it is certainly useful for the recovery of small debts, by stated payments, useful to the plaintiff, and not inconvenient to the industrious debtor. "Here the candidates, for representing the city, take their stand; and here, said my friend, the fate of expecting numbers will be determined, this winter, by the Wheel of Fortune, the representation of which we have seen in so many windows as we passed along, where thousands are to be had for shillings, and twenty thousands for crowns."

This naturally led us into reflections on state lotteries, which, though an easy way for government to raise money, yet, being the means of encouraging gaming and idleness among the people, and supporting a set of locusts that prey upon them, ought, upon every principle of policy, to be abolished.

We

44 B O W C H U R C H, &c.

We now directed our course eastward, and, in our way, cast a glance on the high steeple of

B O W C H U R C H,

In the tower of which, such a variety of architecture is displayed, the whole of which is terminated by a vast dragon, excellently calculated to attract the lightning in a thunder-storm, and to shatter the stupendous fabric.

Proceeding onwards, we came presently to

The M A N S I O N - H O U S E.

Here STOCKS MARKET formerly stood, and here it was resolved to erect a residence for the Lord Mayors of London; but the building, however elegant and convenient *within*, is of a heavy appearance *without*; and though a palace is a greater ornament than a market-place, yet it is a pity that *this* had not been built at Cheapside Conduit, or some more convenient and conspicuous place; and if the architecture had been lighter, it would have recommended itself greatly to the eye of the beholder; it stands, however, convenient enough for the defence of the Bank and Lombard-street, where so much of the treasure of the nation is deposited; yet the citizens, it seems, have seen them both deserted, and left, (for aught of exertion from the great House), to be the prey of a lawless rabble! —

The B A N K,

Next struck our attention: "This, said my friend, would probably have fallen, had the rioters made an early attack upon it; and what must

The ROYAL EXCHANGE. 45

must have been the consequence? the total ruin of whole families, and the subversion of national credit.

“ Here is deposited not only the great bulk of the cash, but also the good faith of the commonwealth; and its establishment is, at present, so intimately interwoven with that of the state, that both would likely fall together.—We were now arrived at the

ROYAL EXCHANGE,

A building well calculated to answer the purposes for which it was planned and erected. If, therefore the *useful* is the *fair*, this must be allowed, without the least consideration of the architecture, to be a most excellent edifice; the niches, for the statues of the kings, are well contrived, and the walks, for different trading nations, properly laid out. Notwithstanding all which conveniences, many people are disposed to do their business on the outside of the building, and at the adjacent coffee-houses, who would have found themselves much discomposed, if there had been no exchange here, to accommodate them.—

“ The coffee-house men then (said I) are obliged to these people.” Yes, replied Mr. Ambler, and even that confined one, which you see over the way, keeps a waiter who, without receiving any wages, finds his place worth upwards of one hundred a year; but they are, at present, too much crowded for us to enter with any degree of satisfaction.”

The calls of hunger, at present, reminding us that it was time to attend to the calls of our stomachs, my companion proposed our adjourning

ing to an eating-house in the neighbourhood, where, he assured me, that we should find genteel accommodations; I readily consented, and, in less than two minutes, we reached a place of public resort, where we were shewn into a handsome room, and found a motley groupe of persons, most of whom, however, had the stamp of citizens deeply enough impressed upon them.—Here was one devouring his victuals with an appetite like that of the fabled Milo, who first carried an ox on his shoulders, and then ate him at one meal; there was another piddling with a nice dish, as if he thought it a labour to make his repast; whilst, in the next box, was a fat elderly gentleman who, though he had been just before regaling on turtle soup, had tucked his napkin up to his chin, and was making an end of a fine duck, picking the bones with great composure.

Mr. Ambler and myself sat down to a moderate repast, more inclined to attend to the company than to our dinner; but, as we could scarcely hear any other sound than the playing of knives and forks, and the ringing of the bell for the waiter, it was natural to suppose we should not be able to make any remarks of consequence, here, unless the gentlemen staid to take their pint of wine after dinner, a custom which, it seems, few of them adopted. My friend gave me the following account of the house:

“ This (said he) is a place to which *two* sorts of people resort: the one, are those who, though in high life, chuse to eat and drink cheaply; the others, such as can afford but little, and yet like to live genteelly. Of the first sort, is that effeminate young fellow, on whom I saw you fix your eyes; the person whom you observed to eat so eagerly, is of the second sort; and as to the elderly

elderly gentleman opposite to us, he is a man of business, but so much devoted to his appetite, that when *that* calls upon him he cannot have patience to repair home, but takes a good dinner wherever he finds it."

As nobody was sitting with us, and the company did not seem very socially inclined, we thought proper to pay our reckoning, which was very moderate, (a sober bowl of punch included), and to withdraw in search of farther adventures.

When we were come to the corner of Fish-street Hill, Mr. Ambler observing that he wished to see a friend on the other side of the water, with whom he had some business to transact, I readily agreed that business and pleasure should go hand-in-hand together; so we proceeded till we came to

The MONUMENT.

I asked him if he ever had the curiosity to ascend this wonderful structure; he answered in the affirmative, but observed, that the ascent was dark and disagreeable, and the prospect such as made him giddy. "In my opinion (added he) this pillar is not at all useful, and very little ornamental; it is by no means well situate; and, as they say, rather in a ruinous situation, and not possible now to ascend."—"Pray, said I, what think you of the figures and inscription?"—"As to the figures, replied Mr. Ambler, they are well executed; as to the *inscription*, perhaps, you may remember what Mr. Pope has said upon the occasion:

"Here London's column, pointing to the
skies,

"Like a tall Bully, rears its head and LIES.

"I

48 LONDON BRIDGE, &c.

“I am pretty much inclined to believe, this is really the case; for, when we consider the manner in which the old city of London was built, we may easily conceive how a fire so extensive as that, might happen without any design. At any rate, it is curious enough to reflect, that the king, in whose reign this public testimony against the papists was given, was himself suspected to be a catholic.—We were now on

LONDON BRIDGE,

Which Mr. Ambler observed to be awkwardly altered, at a great expence, in imitation of the New Bridge at Westminster. “This, said he, is like *washing the blackmoor white*, since the fall, and other nuisances, have not yet been removed.

As he spoke this, we crossed by Tooley-street, (St. Olave’s, properly called), equally infamous with Thames-street, which we had before passed, for the destruction of foot-passengers by coaches, carts, drays, &c. and after much pushing and thrusting, we arrived in

The BOROUGH of SOUTHWARK,

Here it was market-day, and there was a great bustle, occasioned by carriages and cattle; “this, said my conductor, is the land of *hops* and *cheese*, and may justly be said to rival the city (in proportion to its size) for trade, noise and confusion. He now remarked on the great nuisance it was to hold a market in a narrow street, which is the case here; though there is a spot marked out, upon the right-hand, for that express purpose. While he was speaking, an ox, having been

been tormented by one of those brutes in human shape commonly called drovers, ran, with great fury, along the street, just as we were crossing near St. Thomas's hospital; luckily, we narrowly escaped the beast, which appearing to have fixed his eyes on a man that crossed just by, pursued him, and, in so doing, endeavoured to make a leap, by which means he was entangled in the harness of a cart, where we left him to his fate; and I waited at the inn, (remarkable for the entertainment of Sir Geoffrey Chaucer, the old English poet, and his pilgrims) till my friend had transacted his business, and then we returned into the city.

As we directed our course eastward, my friend bade me take notice of a little street on our left hand, which was

DUKE'S PLACE.

“Here, said he, the Jews have a synagogue; and here the black sheep of the *foul drove* execute their schemes of swindling, daily, as they do, nightly, those of encouraging theft by receiving stolen goods. However, I would not be mistaken, I do not mean to arraign the whole people; wandering, dispersed as they are, they need not be oppressed; but facts are strong against many of them, and Jew swindlers and Jew bail are notorious in this metropolis. But, to drop this subject, cast your eyes on the market a little behind us, to the right, called

LEADENHALL, (properly LEATHER-HALL), MARKET.

It is said to be one of the cheapest and best in London; I have lived in its neighbourhood, and
E have

50 ALDGATE AND THE TOWER.

have seen meat bought there as dear, and as bad, as at any market in town. But a *good name* is the greatest recommendation. By this time we had come to the spot where

A L D G A T E

Formerly stood; when my friend, after some reflections on antiquity, joined with me in the opinion, that the gates of the city being no longer useful, but proving an obstruction to carriages and passengers, were very properly removed, in order to make way for new improvements.

The row of butchers shops at Whitechapel, like that of the Borough, received our hearty reprobation; we left that street, for the present, and proceeded down the Minories, till we came in view of

The T O W E R,

As we had both, in former days, seen the inside of this building, we had no inclination, at this time, to enter it; but my companion could not help making a few remarks upon the history of this ancient building.

“Some assert, said he, that a part of this Tower was built by Julius Cæsar; I can easily conceive this to be a piece of fabulous history. To a Norman prince it doubtless owed its original, and has frequently been considered as a check upon the city of London; it has, besides, sometimes been the palace of kings, sometimes their prison; and, indeed, were I to speak a private opinion on the subject, I must say, I think it has been infamous for the deeds transacted in it. Our late poet, Gray, has therefore, aptly enough,

enough, put these words into the mouth of his Welch bard :

“ Ye tow’rs of Julius ! London’s lasting shame,

“ With many a dark and midnight murder fed !”

“ For, certainly, many worthy persons have, in former ages, been untimely destroyed in this accursed place. Considered as a fortification, the guns may have an effect as commanding the river ; but could a single field-piece be brought to bear upon the edifice, it would presently be a heap of ruins.”

On our right-hand, as we returned, Mr. Ambler desired me to remark

ROSEMARY-LANE, commonly called RAG-FAIR,

Where, as he observed, people, of all ranks and ages, might be fitted with apparel of all kinds, from the gentleman to the journeyman, without a minute’s notice. “ But, added he, those who come hither for this purpose, if they mean to buy, ought to be well acquainted with the method of second-hand dealing, or else it is likely that they will be considerable losers by the bargain.”

We now advanced along this bustling street, where we observed, that there was almost as much business done in the common highway, as in the houses. As we passed along, we were witnesses to a single combat, in the bruising way, between a stout young fellow, genteelly dressed, and a man, taller, and apparently stronger, than himself, who had on very indifferent apparel ; the latter, who, as we were informed, was the

52 A BRUISING-MATCH.

aggressor, was vanquished; but when the conqueror enquired after his hat and watch, which he had delivered into the care of some by-standers, these were not to be found; and it was not without difficulty, that he recovered his coat, waistcoat, and shirt, with which he was obliged to go off contented.

Being once more tired, Mr. Ambler proposed going into some public-house to refresh ourselves; we pitched on the genteelst that we could find; here we were shewn into a back room, though, however, the landlady took care to intimate, that this was to be looked upon as a favour, since she had a set of *gentlemen* who generally filled this room about that hour in the afternoon; adding, that she hoped we were gentlemen.

My companion and I sat down to our punch without attending much to her address; but we had not remained long in the room, before we overheard the following discourse, between a Jew dealer and an adventurer, in the next apartment, that was separated from us only by a thin partition, which I shall give in dialogue, by way of rendering it more intelligible to the reader.

Advent. "Why, really, Mr. *Solomons* (*Schlomo*, if you please, said the Jew, interrupting him) well, then, Mr. *Schlomo*, this is not to be called a living profit; you know how hard we labour."

Jew. "Yes, I know all dat; but good Mr. Shiftall (*Shifter*, if you please, said the other) vel, den, good Mr. *Shifter*! if you do work never so hard, who does run de hazard?"

Advent. "Why, to be sure, there are hazards in all trades; though I know you followers of Moses, chuse to deal upon the safest bottom."

Jew. "Don't talk of dat; was I in de mind to be so false as Christian people are, I could
speak

ſpeak as Mr. Vanderfluyt has many times done; how Moſchey (Moſes) our great lawgiver, did bid ſpoil de *Ægyptians*; but I do not ſay ſo. Come, where be your wares?"

Advent. "Here are the fruits of my induſtry: A diamond necklace and ring, a pair of paſte buckles, two pairs of ſilver, and a gold watch; of the prices of theſe we are agreed, we differ only about the diamond pin, and the hat and watch taken, juſt now, in the laſt fray; as to the firſt, I hazarded my neck for it; the laſt affair was done *clean*; and you muſt own, Mr. *Schlomo*, that all theſe articles are worth four times the money I have demanded for them."

A fit of coughing ſeizing my friend, at this time, the remainder of the diſcourſe was carried on in a lower key, as I ſuppoſed, for fear of detection; however, we had heard enough to gueſs which way the young man's hat and watch had gone; but, as Mr. Ambler obſerved, we were not in a place where it would be proper, nor, indeed, would it be of ſervice, to make any obſervations.

Being fully convinced of this truth, I quitted the houſe, and was not at all ſorry when we were near the end of Roſemary-lane, at the upper end of which we obſerved ſeveral ſea-faring perſons, who were more buſily employed in traficking for women's fleſh, than in buying clothes, though the latter, in the idea of ſome landmen, might have appeared to be neceſſary for them. My companion could not help obſerving on the thoughtleſs conduct of theſe people, who, abroad, are the ſtrength of the nation; but, at home, waſte their own ſtrength and money in theſe precincts, where they often receive diſeaſe in exchange for their love, and, when their caſh is

54 A HOUSE OF ILL-RESORT.

spent, abuse in return for their kindness. "Yet, (added he) should these people, on the contrary, save their money, where should we find sailors to conduct our merchantmen, and to man our navy? But they go off at Deal, or Portsmouth; come back with full pockets, spend their money at *the Point* and Wapping, and then to sea again *like true-born Englishmen*."—I confessed this to be a just picture of our Tars, on whose valour we so much depend for the safety of this country; two of whom meeting at this time in the street, after a hearty salute, gave the bystanders to understand, that each of them was returned from sea: one from a fortunate, the other from an unsuccessful cruise. The latter of these lamenting his hard case, the other put some pieces of gold into his hand, telling him he was in a hurry just then; but d——ng his eyes if he should not be happy to see him, at a house he mentioned, in Wapping, at eight o'clock, when he would put him in a way to make his fortune; at the same time he added, "there would be d——n'd fine girls, and plenty of grog stirring."

Keeping on our course, Mr. Ambler proposed, as it grew towards evening, to avoid, as much as possible, tracing the paths we had already trodden, that we should bend towards the left, and return by another way than we came. This being agreed to, we turned off to the westward, and soon found ourselves in the neighbourhood of those streets which were to lead us by an indirect way through the city.

My companion was about to entertain me with some remarks on this quarter, to which I was an entire stranger, when a severe shower of rain obliged us to take shelter in a public house of a decent appearance. We had, however, no sooner entered

entered the public room, than our ears were offended with many execrations, and all the slang of Newgate. Not at all relishing our situation, we asked the landlady, a buxom widow, who appeared to have much good nature in her countenance, whether we could not have another room. She replied by immediately shewing us into a parlour, where was only an elderly gentleman, who, very obligingly, offered to retire if we were upon business; this we would not allow, but, growing a little familiar with him, asked him to partake of our punch; he did so, and proved the social companion of an hour. Observing his disposition, Mr. Ambler took the liberty of asking him what sort of persons those customers in the public room were, who seemingly took so much pains to render themselves disagreeable.

“ I must preface my account, Sir, said the old gentleman, by acquainting you, that this has long been a house of ill resort, and the present landlady, though really of honest principles, is too weak to take the resolution as her friends have advised her, of altering the disposition of things and giving it a new character. As to the persons you speak of, they are young men, some indeed, apprentices, others journeymen; most of them have trades, but few follow them; bad company, idleness, gaming, and the frequent attendance on trials at the Old Bailey and executions at Tyburn, have made them what they are; and having learned the language of thieves and thief-takers, they are become companions for those *respectable* persons. Two of these youths have been found faulty; but the offences not being capital, one was pardoned by his master, and the other was sheltered by his *good* friends

56 A COUNTRYMAN IN DANGER.

friends the thief-takers, who keep him as men do pigs and poultry, for the sake of what they shall get by their death ; and if he does not timely see his error, some of them will soon get forty pounds by him. But do you observe that middle-sized man, in mourning, who is walking from the tap-room to the back-parlour, and from the parlour to the tap-room again ? he belongs to a set of swindlers and sharpers ; nobody can pass a false draught, or tell a fraudulent lie, with a better grace. He can palm a card, *pluck a pigeon*, or cog a die, as the phrase is, with any man. He is in all parts of the town, at various times, in different characters ; he has a sister on the town, and it is but lately, that he quarrelled with the landlord of a tavern, in the city, because he was refused the use of a private room with *her*, at a time when he had another passion, besides that of gain, to gratify. Now observe, his two companions are arrived, he absconds ; they have brought with them a countryman who looks like a farmer ; and him, you may depend, they intend to fleece. Mr. *Black* waits his cue to go in ; observe his motions, and if you have a mind, gentlemen, I think it will be possible, for this time, to disappoint him in his villainous intentions."

Mr. Ambler, observing that these were a set of men even worse than those whose language and manners had proved so disagreeable, said nothing would give him more pleasure than such an opportunity.

While he was speaking, a carriage stopped at the door, out of which stepped a tall swarthy man, who immediately walked into the parlour. " I am acquainted with that seeming gentleman (said our good old Instructor) ; he was originally descended of a good family in Ireland, but had

only a small fortune, which, being of an extravagant turn, he soon dissipated, and began to have recourse to gaming, and other such *honourable* means to procure a subsistence.—At this time a relation of his proposed his marrying a woman of five thousand pounds fortune. She was little and deformed; but this was no objection to Mr. H——; he resolved to have her for the sake of her money. This, however, she took care to have so well secured that he could not personally draw a penny of it. Nevertheless he depended so much on his own *personal abilities*, that he made no doubt of getting whatever he wanted from her weakness, as soon as the nuptial knot should be tied. For some time he succeeded very well in playing this game; but the dame by degrees growing wiser stopped her hand, and, in effect, never drew her purse strings, but when some imprudent action of his hazarded that reputation in which her own was involved. But this happening too frequently, she at last entirely withdrew herself from him, and to make all safe, as she thought, placed the remainder of her money in the hands of a banker; but he failing, she has returned to her relations, and her husband to the honourable profession of sharpening and swindling.”

On the idea of old acquaintance, the old gentleman now rang the bell, and inquired for Mr. H——, desiring he might be told that a friend wanted to speak with him.—The answer returned was, that Mr. H—— was busy; but our Informant was not to be thus disappointed. He immediately proceeded towards the back parlour, and pretending to be a little affected with the fumes of Bacchus, pushed open the door which it seems, the landlady would not suffer to be

58 GOODMAN'S FIELDS.

be fastened, then addressing himself to Mr. H——, called him by name, and introduced us, as we followed him, under the description of his good friends.

H—— knew not what to do. He could not disown his old acquaintance, so at last thought proper to carry off all with a good grace. They were engaged at dice; but as he easily guessed, *Nothing in his way could be done* while we were there, the gaming was set aside, and the countryman whom they originally meant to take in, being allowed, from policy, to win at first, pocketed his winning, and walked off while we kept Mr. H—— in conversation.

When this end was answered, the old gentleman proposed that we should all pay our reckoning and depart. This we all did, H—— and his companions going home with heavy hearts, and Mr. Ambler and I departed, much rejoiced at having disappointed these pests of society of their expected booty.

As we passed through the nest of streets that constitute

GOODMAN'S FIELDS

We were accosted by a young girl at a door, who in a low voice asked my companion to walk up stairs and drink a dish of tea with her and her friend. These words, accompanied by a bewitching smile, seemed to have some effect on Mr. Ambler. However, fearful of consequences, I pulled him back, but just then another female appeared in the passage, who, calling him by name, renewed the invitation. On this, as he told me he knew the person, and there could be no danger, I consented to follow her up
stairs,

stairs, where we found a handsome apartment, and the tea equipage set out in very good order.

"It is a long time, Sally, (said my companion, seating himself) since I have seen you."—

"It is so, Sir, replied the lady, and since then I have met with various adventures; but you see I have not yet forgot my old friends."

We now drank our tea, which to what are called *women's men* is at that time of the evening generally very agreeable. I found Sally by her conversation to be a woman of understanding; and without even mentioning a sensual inclination, had she been other than she was, I should have thought myself supremely happy in her company. While such were my thoughts, I could not help admiring at the chance that had thrown her into this way of life, and, as it seemed, she discovered some traces of this both in my words and my countenance; for she addressed me in the following manner:

"Sir, to me you are a stranger; but it is perhaps rather my unhappiness than my fault that I am in a situation which generally compels females not to make strangers any body.—This was not always my case. But to proceed with my observation. You seem surprised to hear common sense from the mouth of one whom you deem a common woman. That gentleman (Mr. Ambler) has been formerly acquainted with me. He knows well what I *was*. Alas! it is too plain what I *am*!—Descended from a good family, but come to distress. I was first seen and seduced by Sir ———, an Irish baronet, a married man; but that was a circumstance which then, at fourteen years of age, I was not acquainted with. He found me with a poor distant relation, who bartered my innocence for gold. After
his

60 THE HISTORY CONTINUED.

his conquest, however, Sir ——— used me as well as I could expect; nay, better, had I known his real situation; and more than once he offered to make a settlement on me, which I, unknowing of the ways of the world, never pressed upon him. In the mean time, the nephew of the person in whose house the baronet had placed me, paid me his honourable addresses. I sincerely told the young man my situation. With equal sincerity he declared, that if I could really love him, that should be no bar to our union; fully persuaded that a virtuous life would be most likely to tend to my happiness, I listened to his suit, and paid the highest tribute to his generosity. Sir ——— had just got his lawyer to draw up a settlement when he heard of this intercourse; he came to my lodgings, reproached me with inconstancy, ridiculed me for listening to a tradesman's addresses, and in the end threw into the fire those papers which were to have confirmed to me an hundred and fifty pounds per annum for life. He then gave me a fifty pound note, as the last present I was ever to expect from him, paid for six months board and lodging, and left me to my fortune. A few weeks after, my lover caught the small pox, and died of it, and left me more miserable than ever!

“To relate the various turns of fortune which reduced me by degrees to my present station, would be taking up your time to little purpose; and if you have a feeling heart, some part of the story would give you pain. It is easy to descend from Fortune; but as the Roman poet says (do not be surprised!)

“*To rise* is that which is productive of pain and labour.”

Suffice

Suffice it to say, that after many changes of situation, Mrs. B——, the abbess of our nunnery, as we sometimes call it, in imitation of our betters, saw me, and fixed her eyes upon me as one fit for her purpose. After adjusting a few preliminaries, I was admitted among the sisterhood. It must be allowed that Goodman's Fields may be properly reckoned on the decline; however, as Mrs. B—— observes, there are still some few houses of genteel reception, and indeed her own is the principal."

I was much entertained with the lady's narration, and, being grown familiar, took the liberty of asking her whether she could tell how her young companion came into the same situation? "Yes, said she, as far as I have heard the account from her own mouth, Sophy W—— is a native of Ireland, as her countenance and blue eyes pretty plainly shew. She was the daughter of persons in good trade in the city of Dublin. A mother's fondness and a father's carelessness occasioned her to be bred in such a manner as to be fit for nothing. Mr. W—— failing in business, she was turned out upon the world at an early period of life. Baffled in every other hope, she looked out for a genteel service. She was at first received by one who had been her school-fellow, and was once looked upon as her inferior; but this young lady having experienced the smiles of fortune, as Sophy had met with its frowns, treated her old acquaintance in a most contemptuous manner, and took the greatest pleasure in mortifying her. The other not being of a temper to bear this treatment, took the first opportunity of quitting her service; and, having an advantageous offer, quitted her

F

mother-

62 GREAT AYLIE STREET.

mother-country (her father was by this time dead), and embarked for England.

“ The vessel had very bad weather, and at last was driven on shore on the western coast, where she went to pieces. Sophy was one of the few saved from the wreck, but brought nothing to land but her cloaths on her back, and a purse containing a few guineas, which she always carried in her bosom.

“ With this small supply she set forward for London, having heard great commendations of the metropolis, at the first inn that she had entered; she stopped, however, at Bristol, and here she was debauched by a young officer, who deserted her in a most unmanly manner, and had afterwards some *apparently* very advantageous offers made her by a person who wished to take her into keeping; but this person proving to be a married man, and on the eve of a bankruptcy, she quitted her design, and continued her journey to London in the common stage coach.

Mrs. B——, who has many emissaries, happened to have one in waiting at the inn where Sophy put up in Piccadilly. She was soon engaged for our abbess, and has since been constant to the house. At first fifty pounds were paid for what she had *not* to dispose of, and she and Mrs. B—— shared in the profits. At present, as she is grown familiar, and as a pretty face is almost all she has to boast, her price is lowered sufficiently, and she receives, on certain conditions, any man of genteel appearance who solicits her company.”

As the weather cleared up, my friend and I prepared to depart, not without his remarking on the charges that happen in particular places.

“ Here once, said he, were many more of these
houses

houses of Resort.—Here once was a play-house, whose neighbourhood at first possibly encouraged them; and on that theatre the great English Roscius, Garrick, first made his appearance.”

We now proceeded through the crossing streets till we found ourselves in

S P I T A L - F I E L D S,

Where the number of foreigners who fled thither from persecution in Queen Elizabeth's days has proved so valuable an acquisition to the nation, that a manufactory, before little known in this land, has flourished accordingly, and such new streets have been built as have made this once poor place wear a very respectable appearance.

We were now naturally led into a disquisition on the propriety or impropriety of employing foreigners, when Mr. Ambler very sensibly observed, that it was certainly good policy in this kingdom (especially in the infancy of commerce) to employ such useful hands as were willing to work for their bread, or could bring with them the improvement of arts and manufactories from foreign countries; at the same time, that he was by no means of opinion that it was proper to import such swarms of French valets, hair-dressers, or any set of men who in war might sometimes act as spies, and who would either subsist in an idle manner, or take the bread out of the mouths of Englishmen.

Being now arrived in Bishopsgate-street, we directed our course towards Cornhill, observing in our way, the

L O N D O N,

As it is emphatically styled, by La Forest, leaving us in doubt, did not the appearance of the

place speak for itself, whether it might be the London Hospital, the London Workhouse, or the LONDON TAVERN. My friend told me there were several of the most elegant rooms here of any that are to be found in the city; but looking at his watch, it is just now about time, said he, to treat you with what may possibly be a new kind of entertainment.—“Have you ever been at any of the SOCIETIES *for* FREE DEBATE, as they are called?” I answered in the negative. “Well then, Sir, said he, if you please I will take you to one of those modern schools of eloquence. To acquaint you with their origin, I must observe, that the ROBIN-HOOD and the QUEEN’S-ARMS were the first things of the sort ever known in this Metropolis; but in time they dwindled away, and others rose upon their ruins. Last winter there were swarms of them, as COACH-MAKERS HALL (removed from Bow-lane), a society in COVENT-GARDEN, the FREE-MASONS-ARMS, in Queen-street, another in Portugal-street, the LYCEUM, in Bond-street, the CASSINO Rooms, in Great Marlborough-street, CARLISLE House, and a society in SPRING-GARDENS. One would scarcely have thought it possible for all these to be supported; they went on, however, though no doubt some people were losers who established them. This season they are not so numerous; but at the society where we are going, and at Coach-makers Hall, there is some good speaking.” My companion had but just finished this little recital, when we were interrupted by a great bustle in the street, just as we were crossing the way to the place of our destination. On inquiring what was the matter, a woman who stood by, pointed to a genteel young fellow, who was giving a severe discipline

discipline to a man of a swarthy complexion.—“That man, said she, is one of the people called Duffers, who pretend to sell smuggled goods, such as silk handkerchiefs, and stockings; and thereby inveigle people to buy of them, artfully palming upon them commodities not worth one fourth of the money given for them. This young man, it seems, was taken in by this rascal about a week since, and having met him by chance in the street, is now giving him his deserts.”—The cheat got a pretty drubbing; but a fellow coming up offered to box his chastiser; however, being far his superior in strength, the people assembled would not suffer this, and the young man offered a crown to any body that could beat him in his own way; when a porter soon presented himself, undertook the combat, and, after some hard blows, vanquished his opponent, who was presently known by one of the by-standers to be one of the *gentlemen* who are termed money-droppers, and who had probably in his time deceived many a thoughtless youth or heedless man*.

The injured party now putting his hand in his pocket, to give five shillings to the porter, prepared to depart, but found that somebody had been so dextrous as to deprive him of all his loose silver during the scuffle, as well as his pocket handkerchief. The rest of his money and his watch would have gone the same way, but that the gold was safely deposited in a private pocket, and his

* For a particular account of those duffers, money-droppers, swindlers, and other sharpers, we would earnestly recommend the *FRAUDS OF LONDON DETECTED*; which exposes all their devices, and is an excellent warning-piece to the unwary. *Be careful to ask for King's Frauds of London detected*, with copper-plates, price only one shilling.

66 KING's-ARMS SOCIETY.

watch was so well secured by the chain, that it was almost impossible to take it out. After this loss, he went to a neighbouring house where he was known, in order to get change;—and we proceeded to

The KING's ARMS TAVERN.

Here we were shewn into a handsome room, where about two hundred and fifty persons were assembled, all of whom had their eyes fixed upon the president, a man between fifty and sixty, who had just entered the chair, and gave out a political question relative to the privileges of parliaments and the rights of the people.—Subjects, which however well discussed in such societies, will always remain matter of dispute among the politicians of the day, both in public and private companies.

The Person who opened the question was one of a genteel appearance, who seemed to be about twenty eight years of age. He handled it with judgement, had some argument, much plausibility, and a great deal of that flowery rhetoric and winning manner that so much takes with the audience. He spoke greatly in favour of the rights of the people, and received the applause of three-fourths of the society.

After him rose a little man of a very plain appearance, who, without any flowers of oratory, used much of solid argument; spoke in favour of the government, and the rights of parliament, and was likewise received with great applause.

Another member arose, as he said, to speak; but after much hesitation confessed, as was pretty plain, that he was not capable of proper utterance,

ance, and sat down, after being complimented with a few hisses by the company.

One who sat almost fronting the President, next got up, and spoke for about ten minutes; but at last said, as he had not considered the subject, he hoped he should be excused from giving any opinion upon it. This member likewise received a few hisses; though the president, who sometimes spoke himself at intervals, and was a man of no contemptible abilities, declared that mode of expressing disapprobation was intirely contrary to the rules of the society.

A man of great apparent gravity, who sat in a very conspicuous place, now did the society the favour to rise; he said his design was to speak immediately and pertinently, to the question; and that he would be as brief as possible. Such were his promises; but he had not uttered half a dozen sentences before he wandered intirely from the subject proposed; led his hearers to the West Indies, and from thence to North America, where he was, in a manner, lost, till the President, by desire, calling him to order, he thundered out, most violent invectives against the S—— n and parliament of Great Britain, and so concluded an harangue which was begun in all the forms of oratory; but, besides its taking up an enormous space of time, was ended in a manner that might disgrace even Billingsgate. This motley orator was, at first, well received; but was, at last, obliged to sit down with no tokens of applause, and some marks of disapprobation and disappointment. Immediately after him, a seemingly effeminate young gentleman spoke; who appeared determined to stick so close to the general rule of beginning low, that, for more than three minutes, those at the distance of two yards could
not

not hear a syllable that he uttered. At last, raising his voice a little, he favoured us with a very specious harangue against m——y, and sat down with an eulogium upon popular government.—He was received with marks of applause; and, if he *could*, or *would*, raise his voice to a proper pitch, might be considered as no contemptible orator. This orator was followed by a tall plain man, in whose countenance good nature and good sense were equally visible. He appeared to be about thirty years of age; and, as he rose, engaged the attention of every one. He very ably combatted the arguments of the first flowery speaker, and those of the American advocate and his co-adjutor. In the course of about six minutes, he exhibited at once, eloquence, action, and sound argument. He had a voice equally loud and harmonious, which he modulated with judgement, and sat down with the universal applause of the company.

A short, thick man next arose, and endeavoured to controvert the arguments of the last speaker. In this attempt he met with no success; but, after throwing out some sarcasms on parliament, sat down well contented with his own abilities. He was partly answered by a grave person, who spoke with great good sense and precision.—Casting our eyes towards the lower end of the room, we now perceived a middle-aged man, who had before made some attempts to speak, but rather through modesty, than a defect of voice, could not be heard. At last, the President calling aloud for silence, he rose and expressed himself with some diffidence, though he acknowledged having been, for many years, acquainted with these societies. As he advanced in his speech, he grew rather rapid; and, in a few minutes, ran over

the arguments on both sides the question, reserving his own particular opinion till the end of his discourse, when he delivered it against the last speaker, and in favour of good government. He was more remarkable for close argument, than for flowers of speech; and was very defective in point of action, which some have declared to be so essential to an orator.

The President now called on those who had something to reply. Mr. Ambler observed, that as it was probable we had already heard all that was worth hearing upon the subject, and what remained would not probably be worth notice, we determined to set off for the Play-house, to which we were the more inclined, as the American advocate rose again, and we had already been witnesses of his long-winded oratory.*

Being pretty much wearied with our walk, and having seen all worth our notice, from St. Paul's to Charing-Cross, we called a coach to carry us to the theatre.

As we were on our journey, I took the liberty to ask my companion whether he could give me any idea of the character or situation in life of the principal performers at the debating society. "As to the President, said he, he belonged originally to the navy; he has since appeared in various characters,

* To such of our readers as would wish to be *properly qualified to deliver their sentiments upon any subject*, either in *public or private conversation*, with *propriety and persuasive elegance*, we would take the liberty of recommending **THE NEW ART OF SPEAKING**; or a **COMPLETE MODERN SYSTEM OF RHETORIC, ELOCUTION and ORATORY**. This is an *excellent performance*, and is so replete with *useful instructions*, that every attentive reader must certainly become an *accomplished speaker*.—In order that all ranks of people may have an opportunity to benefit by its valuable contents, the price is fixed at *only Two Shillings*.

characters, here and in Ireland; he has some learning, and much ready wit; he is now the editor of a newspaper.

“ The first speaker is the son of a capital tradesman of unblemished reputation, a young man of good morals, and blest with a flowery elocution. He was the founder of this particular society.

“ The next is one in a more humble walk of life, formerly a frequenter, and one of the presidents of the Queen's Arms; a man of good character and solid understanding. The President of the old Robin-Hood sat in the corner; but though he could have spoke, chose to remain silent on the occasion.

“ The third speaker, a most contemptible fellow, lives near the Seven Dials, a neighbourhood we shall presently come into; he is partly a knave and partly a fool.

“ The fourth is a stranger to me, and too ridiculous for our consideration.

“ The person who spoke after him is an American, once an agent on the affairs of the Colonists; what he is now, himself best knows; but it is well known, that with all his professions to serve America, he has left that comfortably divided country, and subsists here upon a considerable fortune, living happy under a government which he loses no opportunity to rail at and vilify.

“ The speaker who succeeded him, is a young gentleman bred to the law, who too much adopts the effeminacy of modern manners, at the same time that he gives way to the current of vulgar political opinions!

“ The next is one in middling life, whose speeches, morals, and practice, all agree, without an university education, he can discourse learnedly;

COVENT-GARDEN THEATRE. 71

edly; without being a poet, he can deliver himself poetically; and without being so much noticed as he deserves, by these Societies, he exceeds most of their members in his *too short* speeches, in elocution, argument and action. He who succeeded is a schoolmaster, and a man of abilities. But who was the last speaker? (demanded I.) For sixteen years past, replied Mr. Ambler, I have seen and approved him;—yet his name I know not; his situation I am little acquainted with; but, to me, it appears, however genteel his situation in life may be, that Poverty

“Has froze the genial current of his soul!”

Thus discoursing, the coach stopped at

COVENT GARDEN THEATRE,

Where we arrived at last, just in time for the last act of a tragedy, which, though it called forth the powers of many capital performers, seemed, however, but little to affect the gentlemen and ladies in the boxes; the former, by their loud talking, plainly proving, that they did not attend to their performance; while the latter, as plainly proved, by their deportment, that they had no business there but that of shewing themselves.

A new After-piece, however, being announced, appeared to command a greater degree of attention; and, on this circumstance, I observed to my friend, in a low voice, that comic pieces seemed to be better suited to the genius of this age and nation than the serious ones. “’Tis true, said my companion, and it is generally urged, that Comedy is a just representation of nature; whereas Tragedy is an exaggeration; and that

that it is better to laugh than cry; yet, certainly, it is sometimes necessary to awaken the tender feelings that otherwise might be lost in the breast; and though I think *comedy* very useful, as "catching the manners living as they rise," yet I must always deem *farce* the entertainment of an hour; opera mere sing-song; and pantomime, the pagantry of *puppet-show*. Let it be observed also, that these three are all exaggerations; and that the last is composed of the most monstrous absurdities.

The second act of this petit piece beginning, put an end to our conversation; we staid 'till the end, and found it favourably received, perhaps rather on account of the agreeable musical air introduced, than of the merit of the piece. Mr. Ambler, however, observed that he was glad, for the author's sake, as he always wished to see every tolerable attempt at dramatic composition encouraged.

The old question, so often agitated, now arose between us, namely, whether the stage has, in general, been more favourable to virtue or to vice. I could not help instancing the bad lives of many of the performers, and the immoral expressions and indecencies in numbers of our dramatic pieces, and the intrigues often carried on in play-houses.—This was my companion's reply.

"As to immorality, we shall always find too much of it amongst all classes of men, (the most respectable and religious not excepted), in this great metropolis. Dramatic entertainments have ever been encouraged in all civilised states. In great cities is peculiarly necessary that the people should have their diversions, as they must and will have their hours of relaxation. In this case,

case, what ought we to prefer? drinking has already gained too great ground amongst us; Vauxhall, Renelagh, and the public gardens, are generally left off for the winter season. Astley's is the only place of this kind which, we are told, is to be opened in the cold weather. Whither then should the people, in general, resort? few of them relish; nay, few of them know any thing of the debating societies which, with all their excellences, are not unexceptionable. Whither then, I say, should they go, but to the theatres, for a rational entertainment. It must be confessed that many of our pieces, those especially of the last age, want altering; but, on the whole, the stage exhibits a moral and useful lesson in comedy, laughing at folly; and, in tragedy, punishing vice, and rewarding virtue; and as to intrigues, look into our churches, and you will find them in abundance, and when a popular clergyman preaches, picking up the most abandoned prostitutes, and picking of pockets into the bargain."

I could not but allow the truth of all this; and began to have a better idea of plays and players than I had at first entertained, when we suddenly fell in with a female, who appeared to be violently assaulted both by a man and one of her own sex. On this, Mr. Ambler flew to her assistance, and giving the former a few strokes with his stick, and as I advanced, they both thought fit to retreat. On raising the fair one, whom they had levelled with the ground, she said she was obliged to us, hoped we were gentlemen; and, if so, would take the favour of our escort to her lodgings; this request was readily complied with, as she did not seem to be of the common sort; indeed, there was something extraor-

74 THE BLACK-LION.

dinary in her dress and manner, which, though it did not seem to intitle her to the name of gentlewoman, yet stamped a wide difference on her from those unhappy females who are obliged to get their bread in the streets. Arriving at her lodging, her own maid servant let us in, and we were introduced to a first floor tolerably well, but rather fantastically furnished. The chimney was loaded with silly Chinese ornaments, and festoons of flowers, disposed in a very awkward manner. On enquiring into the history of this lady, which she gave us every encouragement to do, we learned that she was descended from a good family in Scotland; had ran away with a young man in inferior circumstances, who deserting her, she had turned strolling player, in which capacity she continued for two summers; but, at length, was obliged to come up to London, as the saying is, *to seek her fortune*. On this she had repaired to the Black Lion, and some other places of resort about Covent-garden; and, on her return, had been treated as we saw. This woman exhibited some sense and talents; but a much greater share of affectation, which ran through her discourse and tinged all her actions. On our departure, she begged the favour of us to go down the back stairs, which appeared to be a ladder, that very conveniently conducted us to the kitchen upon the ground floor; and from thence to the street door, and so we departed.

On our way, a woman of a very bold appearance asked Mr. Ambler to give her a glass of wine; and, on his refusal, she cried out murder! when two fellows appeared, who, at first, threatened us with their fists and sticks; but, finding that we were not so to be intimidated,
and

and being given to understand that we meant to punish them, they resolved to be beforehand with us, and called the watch; accordingly, a fellow, more fit for an hospital than for such a charge, limped up to us. We submitted immediately; so did the girl, thinking to be followed by her bullies; but they, after making a shew of going quietly on, gave us the slip while the watchman used his rattle. I was somewhat vexed at this matter; but my friend bade me be under no concern, as he said it would only end in shewing me the humours of a watch-house.

We entered accordingly, where Mr. Constable sat in great state, and took care to tell us he was the King's representative. "I am sorry (said I) he has not a better," perceiving his stupidity and weight of liquor, but he bade me be silent. Then the watchman was interrogated, who gave many vague answers; and, as to the girl herself, being deserted by her bullies, she had nothing to say; so, in the end, we were told we might walk out, after paying a gallon of beer towards the expences of the night; Mr. Ambler asked, whether this was an absolute *demand*, or only a *request*? After some hesitation, Mr. Constable (who, at last, proved but a deputy) answered, that the latter was the case; on which we deposited half-a-crown, and received the thanks of all present. The girl was discharged; but some others were brought in before we departed; in the determination of whose cases, we had abundant proofs of the wisdom of the nightly magistrate. A young gentleman was brought in with a high-dressed lady of pleasure; when the Constable discharged them both, and reproved the watchman for *not knowing his duty*. A poor girl was brought thither for no offence but that of

76 WOMEN OF THE TOWN.

not having a lodging; he put her into the dungeon, and assured her she should go to Bridewell. A wretched fellow, with his head almost bruised to pieces, was brought in by three watchmen, on a charge of assaulting them. He was secured; but a flaming woman of the town, charged by a countryman with picking his pockets, was discharged (with a wink) upon her own word, that she would appear the next morning. The door being thrown open, we *issued forth*, the clock having struck eleven, when we directed our course to

A JELLY-HOUSE.

“ This, said Mr. Ambler, is one of those places whither effeminate beaux sometimes resort of a morning; and rakes and girls of the town meet at night. There was formerly a greater number of these; but as there is a fashion in all things, so the taverns, bagnios and genteel night-houses, have taken away great part of their business; there are enough of them left, however, for people to spend their money in knick-knacks, or pick up a wench, upon occasion; *ecce signum!* do you see that old fellow who is just entering? he is come hither for jellies to nourish his body, and a girl to satiate his feeble appetite; observe, he makes up to that black-eyed wench; her leer proclaims, that she knows him; nor is she unacquainted with me, if I chose to make myself known to her. She was the daughter of a person that kept an inn in Oxfordshire, where she was debauched by the ostler, and afterwards ran away with the son of a neighbouring tradesman, who took her to London; where he kept her a few months, and then deserted her.

her. Her father, irritated at her repeated defection, struck her out of his will; and, at his death, which happened while she was in keeping, left all he was possessed of, to a distant relation. The consequence has been, that after some intrigues, of which she never knew how to make a proper advantage, she has been obliged to throw herself upon the town, and has had tolerable good luck hitherto; but, as her face is no longer new, she will probably soon be reduced, unless she can coax somebody into a keeping and a settlement."

Though the person Mr. Ambler spoke of, did not chuse to recognise him, for obvious reasons, yet one of the wenches came up to him, whom he treated with some fine fruit and confectionary, whilst I found myself obliged to do the same by another, who did me the favour of her company.

I perceived by the frequent entries and exits, that the place, at this hour, served chiefly as an introduction to the bagnio, whither the old gentleman and his black-eyed girl, as I supposed, withdrew.

My companion now proposing to shew me the humours of a night-house, we directed our course towards Bow-street, Covent-garden, and presently arrived at

The B R O W N B E A R,

A house equally frequented by bloods, bullies, pimps, chairmen, and those persons who are unfortunate enough to be shut out of their lodgings. On these latter some of the rest too frequently prey; so that the best advice to be given such as are driven to these straits, is to go to bed directly; and never to waste their time in the public
 G 3 room,

78 COMMON NIGHT-HOUSE.

room, amongst a parcel of miscreants, where they may get their pockets picked, and their persons assaulted, with impunity.

Bad as the place was, however, I trusted to Mr. Ambler for my safety; and I was not deceived in him, either as to his knowledge or his fidelity. We secured a small box to ourselves and an acquaintance, whom he met there by chance, and from thence made a few remarks upon the company.

It was, indeed, a motley groupe, consisting of shabby mock gentlemen, hair-dressers, porters, and chairmen, so strangely mingled, that one would have thought they had been placed there merely in opposition to each other. An odd kind of jargon was the consequence; which was, at every turn, interrupted by the landlord or waiter's asking for the money, of each person, beforehand, which our new friend observed, though a common custom in night-houses, not being known to every body, occasioned frequent quarrels.

Some altercations, indeed, happened upon this occasion; but we were witnesses to one of a different nature. A man, shabby-genteel in his appearance, had been, for a long time, vociferating against government, and declaring his wish that England might either become a republic, or fall under the dominion of France and Spain, rather than remain in her present situation. A young fellow, dressed in plain blue, ventured to oppose him. Some words ensuing, the Republican, after several insults offered, struck his antagonist; a battle ensued, in which, though neither party had much to boast of, the aggressor was vanquished, having both his eyes *sealed up*, as the phrase is, and, with many execrations, immediately quitted the company.

Not-

Notwithstanding the noise this battle had occasioned, there were still some people sleeping soundly in the boxes of the public room. We were just getting up to go, when Mr. Ambler's friend asked him, in a low voice, if he did not know the victor in the late fray; fixing his eyes attentively on him—"O! yes, certainly, Ned! "I know Ned—how do you, my old friend?" The stranger immediately recognised him, and called him by his name. On enquiry, it appeared, that this youth, for such he still was, had gone into the service of the East-India Company at an early period; there he had not succeeded, and no half-pay being allowed, his parents were dead, and he had been reduced to great straits in England. Fearing to be pressed for a private sailor, in the course of the present war, he had absconded for some time; but being promised a midshipman's birth, on board a man of war, had appeared again. However, all promises failing him, he was now reduced to such necessity, that he could not even pay for his bed at the Brown Bear. Mr. Ambler, on hearing this narration, made some reflections on the instability of human fate, put a piece of gold into his necessitated friend's hand, took leave of the other, and gave me the hint to take our departure.

"You have just now seen (said he) what is termed a *common* night-house. These places were, originally, intended to be kept open only for hackney-coachmen, and such other persons whose business calls them out at all hours; but, now, most of them are become haunts for the idle and vicious. If you please, we will step into one of the genteeler sort in the neighbourhood; but, you must not suppose we shall find less vice or dissipation.

80 A GENTEEL NIGHT-HOUSE.

A refinement upon wickedness, and that but in a small degree, is all that we can reasonably expect from a scene of this nature. But, see, it opens upon us ! What a strange mixture of company have we, where you observe women are admitted ; which is indeed one *refinement* upon the common places appropriated for night entertainment.

As he spoke we entered the house ; where we saw officers, rakes, barbers, taylors, apprentices, bullies and whores, some sitting, some lolling their heads upon the table, and a great number standing up in groupes, whose talk made the place a Babel of confusion. Here, again, some of the girls were lavish enough in offering us their company ; and though I did not seem inclined to give them much encouragement, yet one of them placed herself on my knee, as did the other on my friend's, and helped us to dispose of some negus, that we had just called for, in a pretty expeditious manner. As I had already been warned not to appear too delicate ; and, as *Horace* advises, “ Not to seem surprised at any thing,” I was not particularly noticed by the company here, any more than at the Jelly House, a circumstance which, to me, was very agreeable. And as the liquor had, by this time, circulated briskly enough to warm the heart, though not to intoxicate the brain, we began to be what is called good company. Though I perceived that, in the midst of his glee, my companion was very cautious in his behaviour, that lest either his person or purse should suffer in this expedition. And, indeed, he pointed out to me some situations, in which certain of the obliging females were very assiduous about those who had taken too freely of the juice of the grape, and were either inclined to sleep, or
though

though awake, were almost insensible of what was passing round them. Among these he pointed out to me a young woman with a very pretty face, and of a flaming appearance, who, as we had great reason to suspect, had been making very free with the pockets of a gentleman that was too far gone (as the phrase is) to be her companion for the night; that, said he, is Harriet D——, whom I well knew in her days of youth and innocence; her parents lived originally in Wales, and, since, in the county of Kent. She was debauched by a young man in the county, after (strange to tell) her *father-in-law* had attempted to seduce her. Eloping from her parents, she came to London, where she was introduced to Lord H——n, of infamous character; and was, for some time, one of his favourites. She was next taken into keeping by a Jew; and after she was discarded by him, having made free with a quantity of his cash, she agreed to live with one D——, since condemned to our *English gallies*; however, she made her bargain that she should *go into company*, occasionally, as the phrase is, and, for some time, picked up a tolerable share of money, 'till just after her paramour's imprisonment, contracting a certain distemper, she came to absolute want; and recovering from it, found none of those on whom she had formerly lavished her money, at all willing to assist her; even two young fellows, to whom she had been equally free of her person and her cash, each refused her the loan of a crown in her distress. From this time she commenced an enmity against the male species, robbing and plundering them whenever opportunity offered. An old bawd, fitting her out with cloaths, proved the means of her again making

making her appearance among the genteeler sort ; but her frequent depredations have occasioned her, for some time past, to avoid this neighbourhood. You find, now she is returned, how she is employing her talents, lest she should forget the use of them.

“ The blue-eyed young woman that sits next her is Sally M——. She was once the mistress of Lord —— ; she too was debauched in early youth ; and, by degrees, reduced to a situation like Harriet’s—however, she differs from her in point of conduct ; for I do not hear that she ever wronged the man to whose embraces she submitted ; but she, like many of them, has her *favourite man*, to whom she gives a great part of her gains, and of whose ill usage she has been frequently known to carry the visible marks about her.”—

By this time, such of the company as were not drunk enough to be sleepy, began not only to be noisy, but, besides, were inclined to be quarrelsome. As occasions to fall out are easily met with here, so one, just at this instant, presented itself between two well-known characters in Covent-garden : A gentleman, who was handing his girl along, happened to run against a table where another sat with his nymph ; by which means a bottle of port, that had been very *judiciously* set just on the edge, was thrown down, and the contents spilt over the cloaths of the gentleman and lady. The spark immediately rose in a passion, and, snatching up a china bowl, formerly replete with negus, threw it at the offender’s head ; who, returning the insult with a blow from his cane, swords were drawn directly, and bloodshed might have ensued, had not the landlord opportunely interfered, and beating down

down their weapons with a poker that he had snatched out of the fire, prevented further mischief.* The company interfering, the heroes were at last reconciled; and, after the scuffle was over, found out that they had been old acquaintance; and, drinking a bottle together, the matter ended amicably. My friend observed, that these duellists, in the cause of *modern honour* (as it is called) were two married men who lived near St. Paul's, whose wives were very agreeable women, and, in every respect, patterns of domestic felicity; but that the names of the husbands were soon expected to appear in the *Gazette*, as they had, for a considerable time, neglected business, and forsaken their families, living in the most debauched and extravagant manner *upon the town*.

As I had sat up beyond my usual hour, I did not find myself at all sleepy; and, Mr. Ambler declaring himself quite fresh, we resolved upon a farther ramble; and, in our way, observed several gentlemen leading temporary spouses to bagnios, on which my friend made the following observation:

“ These places of resort (said he) were formerly only intended for the convenience of bathing; but, like many other institutions, they have been abused. Now they serve for the completion of those intrigues of which we have seen the beginning; and here many a guinea is fooled away for a lodging and a reckoning. Hither likewise, as well as to the neighbouring taverns, girls are sent for to wait on gentlemen; and, out of their receipts, pay so much in the pound to the waiters for pimping for them, who are be-

* For this scene see the elegant frontispiece engraved on purpose for this work, by an eminent artist, who was an eye-witness to the proceeding.

sides, frequently beforehand with them in enjoying the lady's favours. These waiter-pimps, I perceive, you think despicable; what then would you say to men who make it their *sole* employ to pimp for noblemen. Lord H——n, Lord M——, and the late Lord L——r, as well as many other peers, baronets and gentlemen of fortune, now living, have employed such men, and have got them lucrative places when tired out in the service."

I could not but express my astonishment at, and dislike of, their practice; besides, observing what a pity it was, that these noblemens' names should be familiar in the mouths of almost every whore and pander in London.

"Can there be any thing more infamous than such practices?" said I—"yes (replied Mr. Ambler) for example,—do you observe that man who is now sauntering towards Covent garden?—he is one of those wretches, once almost unknown in England. He subsists by gratifying the unnatural vices of his own sex; in short, he is the companion of an infamous fellow, whose name is Dr—b——r, and who, though well known to be guilty of this horrible crime, has hitherto evaded all attempts to bring him to condign punishment."

After a few reflections on the heinousness of this vice, and the methods proper to punish it, we changed the discourse to more agreeable subjects, and passed on without meeting any thing worth remarking, till we came into the neighbourhood of

ST. G I L E S' s.

This parish, as Mr. Ambler observes, has long been infamous for its inhabitants. Here are the
lowest

BLIND AND LAME BEGGARS. 85

lowest of rogues, the lowest of harlots, and, in a word, the worst of mankind. What a pity it is, that the deserving poor, for the sake of small rents, are obliged to live intermixed with them in ruinous houses, bad situations, and with the wretched prospect of seeing their children initiated in vices to which they might otherwise happily remain strangers.—But this will ever be the case 'till there are more reasonable dwellings for the poor; and 'till the common prostitutes are confined to certain districts, as they are in some foreign countries.

Now, if we had chosen it, we might have been witnesses to scenes degrading human nature, and levelling it with the brute creation;—but we were not so inclined; nor did we stop, except at a house near the church, where Mr. Ambler, finding himself taken with a pain in his bowels, went in, to get a glass of such *cordials* as they vended. Here, being much crowded, we were informed, by the landlord, it was club-night, (or rather morning) and many of the members, consisting of blind and lame beggars, shoeblacks, basket, and fruit-women, passed, and repassed, into a back room, where the meeting was held; and where, as Mr. Ambler told me, Ned Shuter (of ridiculous, though facetious memory) had been often president. I was about to make some observations on his conduct, when my friend checked me, observing, that to speak a word in condemnation of it, here, would be, probably, *weightily* resented.

I therefore observed his advice, and quitted the place with him, heaving a sigh for the follies of mankind.—

Leaving these miserable regions, I observed to Mr. Ambler, that I believed the outskirts of a

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TOWNS

town were always noted for scenes somewhat like those which were exhibited in St. Giles's.—“It is true, replied my companion, that the poorer sort of people mostly resort to the suburbs; but yet we generally find, there is a difference as to the quarters of the town. At present, St. Giles's can hardly be considered as the suburb, though, formerly, it was a sort of detached village, bordering upon the fields, as the name of the parish still imports; and Drury-lane, which is now a handsome street, in the days of K. Charles II. was only a little, dirty narrow place, with here and there a house, the abode of wretchedness, poverty and filthiness, and often the harbour for atrocious villainy.—But if you please, in order to illustrate the observation I made upon the various manners prevalent in the suburbs adjoining to different parts of the town, we will now stroll towards Westminster, the extremities of which, you may remember, we did not visit in the morning; some of the opposite crossing streets will lead us thither, and, if there is any thing stirring, we shall soon have an opportunity of gratifying our curiosity.—

According to this proposal, we crossed; and, after passing through several very silent streets, in some of which those guardians of the peace of the inhabitants, the watchmen, were very peaceably slumbering in their boxes, we arrived at a place as infamous as St. Giles's, commonly known by the name of

HEDGE-LANE.

As we were walking along this incommodious street, upon a very narrow pavement, we saw a number of people assembled round a man who
was

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ceived,

ceived, she would see it rectified;---but, as they went along, a man picking a quarrel with him, she pretended to hold him fast, that he might not fight. After which, the man ran away; she skulked down an alley, and he lost a pair of silver shoe-buckles, the only valuable things remaining about him.---

The prostitute who had asked for this relation remarked, that as to the affair last mentioned, she could say nothing; but, with regard to the first part of the story, she did not doubt but the countryman had fallen in with Sukey B——, and Sal. Stokes, one of whom used to decoy people, while the other, counterfeiting a man's voice, frightened them in such a manner as to make them glad to escape without their cloaths or money. In the mean time the poor man, who stood shivering in the open air, had but *cold comfort* of it, as the saying is, since the girl, who spoke to him declared, that whenever Sukey and Sal. Stokes had done a thing of this kind, they always decamped to another part of the town; and, as to the scene of action, they always chose a common lodging-house, where the people would not be answerable for any thing.

Luckily for the countryman, a person who happened to be passing by just at the time the story was telling, and came from the same town as he did, acknowledged his acquaintance, lent him a great-coat, and took him home to sleep with him, at his lodgings, for the remainder of the night.---

When I made some reflections upon this man's imprudence, Mr. Ambler observed, that people who thought they acted wisely, were frequently tricked.——“ For example (said he) there was a gentleman who had, for some time, re-
fided

PARLIAMENT-STREET. 89

sided in foreign parts, though a native of this metropolis, who went to a tavern in this neighbourhood with a *fille de joye*. Being over cautious, he left his purse and pocket-book, containing in money and notes, to the amount of 500*l*. together with a valuable diamond ring, in custody of the people of the house. Thus, thinking himself perfectly secure, as to his property, he slept soundly. When he awaked in the morning, he found his bedfellow in *statu quo*; but, coming down stairs, he called on the waiters in vain; there was not a soul to return an answer. The Landlord and Landlady who, as it seems, for some time before, meditated a flight, had gone off, with the addition of what he had so cautiously lodged in their hands. All inquiries after them were to no purpose; it was supposed they went over to Holland with their booty.

Thus discoursing, we came to the farther end of Parliament-street, near Palace-yard, from whence we had, at once, a view of Westminster Bridge, Westminster-hall, and

The A B B E Y.

The last-mentioned pile, at this solemn hour, (for it was yet dark), struck us with veneration. "The spot on which we now stand, said Mr. Ambler, was once separated from the other part of what is now called Westminster, by an arm of the Thames;—if I recollect, it was called Thorny Island;—before the cathedral church of Westminster was built, which is now as remarkable for its monuments as for its structure.—Of these there are but few erected lately—the old ones, I presume, you have seen; and these memorials have antiquity to stamp a value upon them.

WESTMINSTER HALL,

Where so many causes are debated, occasioned us to make various observations on the uncertainty of the law, and the number of its practitioners.

St. STEPHEN'S CHAPEL

Next drew our attention, where the nobles of the land and the representatives of the people assemble, and form those laws to which the British monarch gives his assent, to promote the public good, as the father of his country.

By this time we had crossed St. Margaret's church-yard, and came to the place where the gatehouse formerly stood, which, as my friend said, was a gloomy and most inconvenient prison; and besides, by its situation obstructed the way with regard to carriages, and was a great hindrance to foot passengers. Having got through this defile, we arrived in

TOTHILL STREET,

Which seems to have taken its name from the adjacent fields, where stands the house of correction for criminals, commonly known by the name of Bridewell. But now we turned aside a little to the left hand, and entered a sort of square called

The ALMONRY.

It was formerly an appendage to the abbey church of Westminster; but as Mr. Ambler observed, it was now become, under the corrupted name of the *Amberry*, a corrupt place, a shelter for a number of abominations. We found the place remarkable principally for infamous public houses.

houses and lodging-houses, generally used only by the most abandoned of mortals. At one of the public houses in this place, as Mr. Ambler told me, lives a poor woman whom he well knew, and whose circumstances claim the pity of every person of humanity. Although formerly a woman of virtue and prudence in her family, yet having been ill used and totally discarded by her husband, (a printer by trade, who lives with an harlot at a village adjoining to the metropolis) is now reduced to the necessity of drawing beer for the most worthless miscreants, who treat her with all the opprobrious language that can be imagined, and this she is obliged to submit to, in order to get just so much of the necessaries of life, as keep her body and soul together. The Amberry (as it is now called) has been famous for producing persons who have moved in all the lower spheres of life. A woman whose parents are still inhabitants here, some time since was taken out of the streets, by the man just now described, and who served as a pimp upon this occasion, and being introduced to his friend, one of the booksellers, an eclarcissement took place, and she was immediately taken into keeping, although very plain in person, and still more so with regard to mental qualifications; but indeed, had she not been of the vulgar cast, her services would not have been accepted by her present keeper, who has lavished away considerable sums upon her, and bought the house for her where she now lives near town, to the no small mortification of his son, who was born in wedlock, and who must suffer very essentially by this imprudent connection. We saw in our way to the Amberry more red coats than we had observed in ten times the space for the preceding part of the evening. Some of these went reeling drunk home

home to their quarters; some were making a noise at alehouse doors, whilst others were taking their harlots to those lodgings before-mentioned; where diseases, disturbances, and vermin, awaited them. "And these (exclaimed I) are gentlemen soldiers!"

"Be patient, Sir, replied Mr. Ambler, I told you we should find a *variety* in the different suburbs of the city. Westminster is the place where soldiers are generally quartered, and therefore we must here expect to find them. As to the idea of their being *gentlemen*, I think this properly depends, with regard to them as well as to other men, rather on their behaviour than on their occupation or profession. The general notion seems to have arisen, from the high respect which a soldier *ought* to entertain of honour. This certainly constitutes the gentleman; but how can this be expected, when our soldiers are huddled together at random, besides being taken from the very dregs of the people!—Believe me, Sir, it is a truly philosophic observation, that unless men are bred to virtue, or subject to the strictest ties of authority, a number of them are never together, but they are the worse for it. The persons in question we well know bear great hardships in war; in peace they are in a state of idleness, which is the mother of vice. Whilst under their commanders, they are subject to a discipline which appears even too strict; we now see them at full liberty—Licentiousness must be the consequence, as the military, it must be acknowledged, is not the best school for virtue."

I was ready to acknowledge the justice of my companion's observations, and could not help adding, I thought it a pity that the pay of the men employed as soldiers, and their situation
were

were such, that none but the dregs of the people, or those who were abandoned by their friends, would ever reduce themselves to the situation of a private man in any of his majesty's regiments.

"The evil replied Mr. Ambler is not easily remedied. This has ever been the case since standing armies have been established in Europe. We are generally loud in our complaints, that taxes are high;—the pay of the army cannot therefore be increased; but there is a method by which the guards and troops in the vicinity of this metropolis, are in some measure provided for: This is by throwing up their pay if they have any trades, and working in their respective occupations. This, however, is by no means favourable to military discipline, which it must in some measure relax, notwithstanding their field days, and their military appearance."

While we were thus discoursing, having left the Almonry and advanced up Tothill-street, we heard the shrieks of a female, and saw a well-dressed man standing near us, who observed, that he believed there was something very bad going on up one of the turnings, but seemed rather fearful of advancing. "My friend, (said Mr. Ambler) if you think so, my companion and I have each a good stick in our hands; you seem to be full as well furnished. In the name of Heaven let us go up! not one or two men can overpower us, unless they have fire-arms, and even in that case, I should not be much afraid of them whilst I can grasp this cudgel. What say you!—The shrieks still continue, will you follow us—at the worst, we may call the watch to our assistance?"

Thus encouraged, the stranger agreed to go with us, and being directed by the voice we proceeded to the place from whence it issued.

On

94 A MODEST LANDLADY.

On our entering the turning, which proved to be a thoroughfare, we could perceive by the light of the moon, just then breaking from a cloud, two fellows busied in endeavouring to strip a female who lay upon the ground, seemingly in no condition to make resistance. On perceiving us, the villains ran off, leaving the poor creature without her cap and handkerchief, with her cloak much torn, and other marks of their brutal behaviour.

Mr. Ambler observing her situation, asked how she happened to be unlucky enough to fall in with such company? her answer was, "She could not tell." The night (or rather morning) being cold, we did not think this a time or place for eclairsissements, and my companion telling us, that if his memory did not fail him, there was a house not an hundred yards distant, to which we might resort, we agreed to take the young woman thither, where her cloaths were as well adjusted as circumstances would admit. As we passed the watch, one of them bade us good morning. When on looking back, he perceived our female companion, he exclaimed, "So the dead woman is come to life, I see!" an observation which we could not readily conceive the meaning of, nor did we stay to enquire, but made the best of our way to the house before-mentioned. The landlady at our first entrance, seemed willing enough to accommodate us with any thing *in her way*, as she phrased it, but objected to the woman's coming in, "because she said, *as how*, it might make people think the house disorderly;" but when our new companion, who had staid a little behind, joined us, her features were immediately softened into a smile. She asked him whether he knew the young woman, on which he said he knew enough to believe her to be a modest girl
that

that had been very ill used.—“As to the matter of that, replied my landlady, I does not trouble my head about people’s using one another; but as long as the girl is honest, as you says, she may sit down; but as to wh——s, I hates such *varment* most mortally.”

This point being settled, we seated ourselves at first in a box, as far removed from the rest of the company as possible, the house being pretty full; yet we had not placed ourselves as we could wish, because we had a desire to know something farther concerning our female companion, who by this time began to hold her head up a little, and was really a very agreeable person, seemingly about twenty years of age.

While we were endeavouring to prevail on her to drink some warm punch, which she rather declined, a serjeant of the guards entered, in his uniform, with a flaming wench, whose streamers declared her to be a first-rate. The son of Mars giving the landlady a wink, she shewed them a private room, declaring, “she had known that gentleman and his spouse, *this long and many a day*; and very civil *gentlefolks*, to be sure, they were.”

Being, by this time, pretty well acquainted what a *modest* house we were got into, Mr. Ambler made a motion, that the elderly gentleman should use his interest with our Hostess, to admit us, likewise, into another apartment, as it was plain enough that she shewed *private rooms* to people whom she was acquainted with.

The gentleman, complying with our request, went up to the mistress of the Castle, and whispering something in her ear, at the same time that he gave her a significant squeeze by the hand, we were beckoned to follow her, and were shewn into a snug little cabin, from whence, through a

96 HISTORY OF AN ORPHAN GIRL.

small square pane of glass, we could easily see all that passed in the public room.

When we were conveniently seated here, Mr. Ambler requested the young woman to inform him how she came to be abroad at such an unreasonable hour; and how she could possibly be ignorant of the cause that reduced her to the situation in which we found her?

“ Sir, (said she), blushing, the situation in which you found me, was such as ought to cover me with shame. I know not whether what I plead in my excuse, will be admitted as an apology for my imprudence.—I am the daughter of one who was formerly a tradesman in the country; but my father and mother being both dead, an aunt of mine has had the generosity to take care of me; and, though but in moderate circumstances, really dealt her favours with such an unsparing hand, that I can scarcely say I have felt the loss of my parents. I passed my earlier years with this good relation in the country, in all the enjoyment of peace and tranquility, till *here*, which has infatuated thousands, occasioned me to leave this happy state.

“ The son of a rich farmer in the neighbourhood, who had long secretly courted me, at last persuaded me to desert my best friend, and to come up to London with him on a promise of marriage. You might also, perhaps, gentlemen, wonder why I did not consult my benefactress upon this occasion, as he had declared that his designs were honourable. Youth is too often imprudent; and besides, as it happened that my lover’s father had long been at enmity with our family, I thought an application of this sort would not answer any purpose. I suffered myself, therefore, to be deluded;—we evaded the eyes

eyes of every one, eluded those who, as I afterwards learned, had been sent in pursuit of us, and arrived safe in London; where my suitor took me separate lodgings, having behaved in such a manner, whilst we were on the road, that I thought I had no reason to suspect him of any ill intentions; but, alas! how little was I acquainted with the world! When this deceiver thought he had me completely in his power, he pressed his suit with greater ardour than before; but accompanied it with such actions as began to open my eyes to his baseness. I saw that not my marriage, but my ruin, was intended; and after I had made some remonstrances to him upon his behaviour, I, one evening, repulsed him in such a manner, when he was using indecent freedoms with me, that he left me in a rage, and protested he would never see me more. I was happy for a moment, congratulating myself on the victory I had gained over his, as well as my own, inclinations.—But my triumph did not last long;—I reflected on my own situation, remembering that I had been intirely obliged to this man for his assistance, who would now withdraw all support, and from whom my heart indeed would not now permit me to accept any; when I considered these things, my mind was thrown into great agitations. My landlady who, I believed, was pretty well informed of every thing, at first seemed greatly concerned at my apparent anxiety; but, on conversing with her, I found her base and insidious. She hinted, that if one lover were lost, another was to be had; talked of the great advantages that some people had made of their persons; and, in fact, did all in her power to persuade me to prostitute my person to the best bidder. I answered her discourse with contempt;

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and, from that time, I never met her without a frown on her brow. Before the end of the week, she told me, plainly, that I must either resolve to make use of the means which I had in my power, to support myself, (in which she would help me, if I would be advised) or else I must not expect she could *harbour* me any longer, as my *keeper* she said, had discharged me, and would not pay another farthing upon my account. Almost mad with vexation, I resolved instantly to quit her house, which I did, with no more apparel than I had on my back, and wandering I knew not whither, met once more with my seducer, who doubtless was planted in a proper place to intercept me, and try to work upon me in the midst of the distresses to which he had reduced me. If this was the case, he missed his aim. I flew from him, and taking shelter in a shop, begged to be protected from a person who pursued me with some bad design. It happened that the shopkeeper was a person of humanity—He desired me to walk up stairs to his wife, to whom, when I had communicated my real situation, she made me the offer of remaining with her to assist in little matters of plain-work, till I could be otherwise provided for. I accepted of this, and as I could not think of returning to my aunt, begged to be recommended to some genteel service. This was complied with, and I was placed with a counsellor's lady, where I lived happy for some time; but an unworthy member of the law, (the well-known 'P——le) happening to be acquainted there, and having intruded himself, upon a slight invitation, to stay some time, this infamous man, after, in vain, trying to seduce me, made a forcible attempt, one Sunday morning, when the family was abroad; in this he failed;
and

and as I protested I would make a proper complaint, he used every means to stigmatize my character; and procured a servant of his to alledge, that he had sufficient reason to know that I was not a modest woman. By some fatality, these accusers were listened to; and, on the first reproaches I received, I quitted the house in a hurry of passion, a circumstance which was construed much to my prejudice.

About this time, Mr. M——, the tradesman who first entertained me, having written to my aunt in my favour, she was disposed to receive me; but, to aggravate my misfortune, the infamous P——le's accusation was first transmitted to Mr. M——; and by his means, to my benefactress. Thus was I, once more, thrown upon the wide world; when it happened, that I met with a young woman who came from the same town as I did. She readily acknowledged me; and kindly, as I thought, asked me to lodge with her. Destitute as I was, it is not wonderful that I accepted the offer. It is about a fortnight since I first met with her; and, during that space of time, I did not perceive any thing that I could disapprove; but this last evening she told me, that a lodger in the house with us had a christening, to which she was invited, with a particular injunction to bring her companion with her. I went accordingly, and, finding a mixed company, would have withdrawn; but this was not allowed. At last, the guests dropping off one by one, I was left alone with my fellow lodger; and on account of what I had drank, (which I really think was mixed with some intoxicating drug,) I found my head to be, in some measure, affected. I would have withdrawn, but was prevented till, to my astonishment, that villain

P——le entered the room. Conceiving myself to be betrayed, I instantly flew to the door, and went down to my own chamber, where, finding the door locked, I ran into the street; and, as I saw nobody to oppose me, went on for some time, till being affected with a giddiness and drowsiness, I insensibly fell down somewhere near St. Margaret's church. What happened from that minute, to the time that you met me, I cannot say, farther, than that awaking, I found some persons endeavouring to strip and abuse me in a vile manner. I shrieked out, and my screams happily brought you, gentlemen, to my assistance. I am thankful to you for my deliverance; my name is R——, and I have told you the truth of my unhappy and tedious story."

Both Mr. Ambler and myself were affected with this relation; and the elderly gentleman appeared more indifferent on the entrance of a person of a genteel appearance, who was bringing a girl into the apartment where we were, by mistake. He no sooner perceived the young woman whom we had thus fortunately rescued, than he exclaimed, "that is the very person whom, as I told you, Nancy, I left in such a condition that there was no stirring her. Those scoundrels called the Guardians of the Night, refused to take care of her; and, on my representation of her situation, said, that was so much greater reason for their not doing any thing in the affair, as they never meddled with *dead people*." The latter part of this speech sufficiently explained the mysterious expression of the man whom we met in Tothill-street. As to the gentleman who had entered thus abruptly, he made an apology, saying, he knew not that there was any company in the room, and was about to
withdraw

INHUMANITY OF WATCHMEN. 101

withdraw ; but perceiving the female that he had with him, though an unfortunate woman, did not seem to be an abandoned prostitute, we desired him to be seated ; when he told us that he, and a friend of his, found Miss R—— lying all along, in the neighbourhood of St. Margaret's Church-yard ; and after trying in vain every method to rouse her, and being disappointed in their idea that the watchmen would take proper care of her, had no other way left than to take her out of the common foot-path, and set her at the door of a house, where it was, at least, hoped that the parish officers would find her in the morning ; but it was supposed, the fellows whom we put to flight, had dragged her up the turning with a view both to rob and abuse her ; and that the liquor (or more probably the sleeping dose) which she had taken, having spent its force, she came to herself just as they were in the act of stripping her, when her shrieks brought us timely to her assistance.

While we were talking on this subject, we were disturbed by a great noise in the next room ; and could plainly hear the warrior abusing his mistress, whom he went so far as to threaten with military execution ; but the landlady coming in, besought him to be pacified, crying and stamping like a mad-woman. “ Oh, Mr. S——, said she, I little expected this from you ; you know I don't mind trifles ; but I *perjest*s, Mr. S——, *as how* you'll ruin my business ;—oh, my house ! the credit of my house, will be lost for ever and a day ; and this because you *brings* such trumpery into it.”

By the remainder of this discourse, we could not doubt but that the *gentleman's spouse*, whom our good hostess, about half an hour before, de-

clared she had known "*this long and many a day,*" as she elegantly phrased it, had never been in the house before; and that the Serjeant had just picked her up in the street as she was on her return from seeking whom she might devour, to her *Den* in Strutton's Grounds, a piece of information which did not at all surprise Mr. Ambler, who now began to think of taking his departure from *this very modest house*, the character of which was *in such high preservation!*

But the disturbance which had begun in the adjoining apartment, was now spread to the tap-room, whither the *gentleman's spouse* chose to transfer the seat of war. This hero who, as she publicly declared, wanted to birk her, had, more than once, half drawn his sword on her and his acquaintance, the landlady. The latter, seeing what turn things were likely to take, would have sent for the watch, but that an old crony of the Serjeant's stood sentinel, and would not suffer any body to pass, in or out, while the contest lasted. The mighty hero, finding himself thus seconded, now ventured to draw his sword intirely from the scabbard; but as he was vapouring about the room, to the no small terror of the women, the young gentleman who had so lately joined our company, opposed him with a good oak stick, disarmed him, and secured his weapon; while a coachman, who had been much offended at being detained after he had paid his reckoning, though he had nothing to do with the quarrel, gave the person who was posted as sentinel, a good drubbing, and turned him out of doors.

The fortune of war having thus turned against the gentleman of the sword, it was amazing to see how quickly he lost his fierceness; and from a haughty dispenser of threats, became a petitioner

tioner that his arms might be restored, which, on some concessions made to the landlady, she promised he should receive by nine in the morning, on condition that he would take a bed in her house, send the girl away with a present, and behave himself peaceably for the future. All these articles he complied with, thinking himself happy to have escaped the resentment of the company which was kindled against him, and the punishment he might have received from his superiors for his conduct in this scene of confusion.

The place being now pretty clear, we resolved to stay no longer. Our new friend and his lady parted from us, with an intention to take a *fiesta* together; and we departed, still keeping Miss R—— in company. Mr. Ambler whispering me that it would be a meritorious act, if we could possibly prevent this young creature from falling into that ruin which, in her situation, appeared to be almost inevitable.——

I was well enough disposed to lend any assistance in my power to an attempt so truly charitable; but knew not what mode to adopt; and the discourse turning upon the disturbance we had just been witnesses to, Mr. Ambler made the following observations: “ We have here seen (said that accurate observer) a picture of low life exhibited at full length, in the character of the landlady. She, like her betters, *talks* of that character which she *has not*; and her folly is, doubtless, plain enough to every one but herself. As to the Serjeant, he is a most contemptible character. In the first place, if he engaged a woman, however vicious, he ought not to have deceived her. In regard to his conduct, during the quarrel, it was most infamous. The soldier, who being armed by his king, and paid with the public

public money for standing forth, when called upon to defend his country, and who dares to draw his sword upon his fellow subjects, certainly deserves an exemplary punishment. We pay for defence, not for assaults; and we should experience the worst of all military governments, were we to be subject to such wretches as these.— People talk of freedom in parliament, brawl for it in alehouses; yet most of them contending for the shadow, lose sight of the substance. Every man that enters into civil society, must necessarily give up a part of his natural rights, in order to enjoy political liberty. After all that our pretended patriots can say, this kind of liberty is only invaded when the constitution is subverted on the one hand, or the persons and properties of peaceable subjects are attacked, on the other. The former of these, I hope, will never happen under a Brunswick's reign; as to the latter, it will never be countenanced by government; and were our valiant Serjeant properly called to account, there is no doubt but that he would be obliged to answer for his daring violation of those laws which ought to bind every one of his profession, from the General Officer to the private centinel; and which, being once set at nought, there is an end to the liberty so much boasted of in these kingdoms.

The morning had not yet dawned upon us, when having passed a church-yard, in order to examine the interior streets of Westminster, we overtook two men with sacks on their backs, one of whom was stopped by the watchman, but the other had evaded him. The person thus stopped threw the load off his back exactly upon the breast of the person that had arrested him in his course, and that he did with so much force, that he absolutely staggered his challenger, who falling
back

back several paces sunk upon his bended knee, upstaying his steps with his massy staff, while the delinquent whom we took for a smuggler, escaped this wary representative of the higher powers. At this time Miss R—— left us in a fright, and we saw no more of her.

The offender having decamped, the watchmen proceeded to search the enemy's baggage, expecting some great prize would reward him for his labour; we likewise being excited by curiosity, stood over him while he made the examination: but what was our surprise, when instead of bundles of tea and other commodities of this sort, we beheld the naked corpse of a beautiful woman, seemingly about twenty-five years of age, whom the fugitives had taken up from her grave in order to serve their own private purposes.

Not a little shocked at the idea of such a proceeding, I expressed my horror of it, when Mr. Ambler made the following remarks.

“ There was a sort of religious prejudice, (if we may so call it, said he) prevailing in former times, which taught people that it was impious to violate the dwellings of the dead. Indeed it appears to me, that the method of burning bodies to ashes instead of intombing them whole, took its origin from a resolution to preserve the relics of illustrious persons from any insults which might be offered, either by the careless, the profane, or their particular enemies. Without entering into a defence or a censure of this mode of interment, so common in ancient times, if you please, we will speak of modern days, and from the present usage judge of the object which has just now so forcibly struck you. To rake up church-yards, to violate the dwellings of the dead, must appear in the most detestable light, if consid-
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dered only upon first principles; and our legislature has ordered punishments to be inflicted on such as are guilty of this species of robbery, yet it still continued, and the persons whom you just now saw, (under the name of *resurrection-men*) continue their business, getting from one guinea to five or six, according to the value set upon the corpse they take up, which they convey to the surgeons, in order to be dissected. Some arguments have been urged for this practice, many against it.

On the one hand it is argued, that notwithstanding all pious prejudices, it is well when we can make the dead contribute to the good of the living. On the other hand, we are told that the surgeons have subjects enough, since they have been allowed the bodies of criminals executed for murder, in order to be dissected at Surgeon's Hall; since that time, as there have been subjects sufficient, it renders these practices inexcusable. Besides the shocking circumstances of taking the dead out of their graves, which is an enormity that savages would not commit, it is certainly a most unjust thing that people should be at expences merely to lay their friends or relations in the ground, and that they should afterwards have the mortification of finding that their remains have been dug up, and all their pious care was vain. The method of burning the bodies of the deceased to ashes, and preserving the reliques in an urn, according to the Grecian custom, which is followed in some countries, prevents this practice, and perhaps gave birth to the idea of putting lime into the coffins of the dead, as a similar method of preservation."

We had by this time involved ourselves in a nest of little streets and lanes, which were so intricate, that Mr. Ambler could scarcely extricate himself.

himself. Many of these like the Almonry, were inhabited by wretches who were a disgrace to humanity, while in their neighbourhood, as in that of St. Giles's, some hundreds of the industrious poor were scattered up and down.

As we passed through one of these defiles, when the wind which blew with some violence, drew as in an eddy, we were alarmed with an uncommon noise, and in a moment were covered over and almost blinded with dust. Turning short to see what was the matter, I perceived that part of a high stack of chimnies had fallen just behind us, providentially without hurting any one, though there were two men and a woman, who like ourselves were in imminent danger from the *cumbrous ruin*, which had absolutely dragged down part of the gable end of the next house with it, the inhabitants of which were so much alarmed, that they came running out into the lane, and among them were two pretty *young ladies* of easy virtue, who coming down in their shifts, were ready to throw themselves into the arms of the men behind us for protection, notwithstanding their thin covering—so would they probably have done if they had not been accommodated with a fig-leaf.

The men not being *cruel*, gave them shelter, and proposed as their own habitation was in such a ruinous situation, to take them home to their own lodgings; the proposal was agreed to, and after having recovered a little from their fright they ventured back again into the house, where they were to dress themselves as quickly as possible, and return to their new acquaintances.

For our part, we walked on, not without remarking on the absurd manner of constructing such narrow streets, not without reprobating the old fashion of high chimnies, with which, were

not some of our modern buildings incumbered, they would soon come to the ground. "The slowness of some of our modern buildings, said Mr. Ambler, is indeed a fault; but it is a greater to suffer old houses to remain in a ruinous condition, till they fall on the heads of their inhabitants. Both these circumstances appear to arise from one and the same cause, namely, an ill-timed parsimony—New edifices are erected in haste, and at small expence; and as to the old ones, they are permitted to remain in a shattered condition, because the landlords will not be at the expence of repairing them. This has been the occasion of some fatal accidents, for which those penurious men, who are so much more careful of their money than of the lives of their fellow-subjects ought to be most severely punished."

Still advancing, we at last cleared ourselves from the labyrinth in which we had been involved, and after some time spent in those crooked turnings, we came to

P E T T Y F R A N C E,

As it is called, having walked above half an hour to reach a place at which we might have arrived in the space of five minutes. At the lower end of this street we saw nothing very promising, but as we went farther on, observed some regular-built genteel habitations, and Mr. Ambler remarked with pleasure, that the same mode of placing iron rails instead of a dead wall was adopted here, as it had been at Knightsbridge, which must be allowed to be a great improvement. Here we first breathed the sweets of the morning air, as it was now just about the dawn of day, and though the year was so far spent, yet the trees
and

and grass were still green, and sent forth an agreeable odour.

Crossing the road commonly called Pimlico, we came insensibly to another road, where, on the left-hand side, we took a view of what was known by the name of

The FIVE FIELDS.

These fields, which led to Chelsea, were formerly notorious for robberies. A great part of them being now built over, and the rest inclosed, we were observing how great an improvement this was; which, at the same time that it proved agreeable to the eye, delivered many of his Majesty's liege subjects from their fears of lawless depredations.

While we were very seriously discoursing on this subject, we advanced far into the road, the day-light still increasing, but met nobody till we had got about half way on our journey; when we were suddenly stopped by two people, who leaping forward with a furious spring, demanded our money, at the same time brandishing their bludgeons. Our answer, though we were surprised, was putting ourselves into a posture of defence. I received the stroke intended for me, by the first assailant, upon my stick, it narrowly escaping my head. Mr. Ambler pressed hard upon the person who attacked him; when a third appeared with a long knife in his hand, and a short stick under his coat. His interference might have given a decisive turn to the battle; but that, just at this time, some horsemen came in sight; on which the footpads made the best use of their heels, and we did not think proper to pursue
K them;

them; but chose rather to pursue our way, Mr. Ambler intending to go towards

TYBURN TURNPIKE;

Where, as soon as we arrived, we went into a public house which was open for the reception of countrymen and carriers.

“ You have seen several night-houses (said my companion) we shall now see a *morning house*. It is between four and five, added he, looking at his watch, and such as it is, we shall find plenty of company.”

On our entrance, we perceived a spacious tap-room; mean indeed, yet neat enough; and being bid welcome by the landlord in a hearty manner, sat down; and following the custom of the company, called for a pot of brandy-hot; which was brought us, as Mr. Ambler declared, in very good order. It was the first time that I remembered to have tasted such a kind of liquor; so that, though it seemed very agreeable, I drank of it very moderately.

In fact, my attention was engaged by some persons in an opposite box. Among these, were a young man who had the appearance of a reputable farmer's son, and a female, of whom he seemed to have a tender care. The rustic was rather tall, and well proportioned; and, though far from being clumsy, was of an Athletic make; and a texture, apparently, very different from that of our flimsy beaux. As to the girl, she was well formed; had fine dark hair, a pair of sparkling eyes, and a good complexion, not indebted to paint to recommend it; health's genuine roses bloomed upon her cheek; her teeth were white, her lips were perfect coral. Her sweetheart (for
such

such he doubtless was) kept her in conversation; but found it a difficult matter to persuade her to drink. She amused herself with some fruit, which she drew from her pocket, and distributed part of it among her company. As she was sitting in a careless manner, her neck handkerchief, by some means, came unpinned, and thus discovered to our view, a sweetly swelling bosom, fair as alabaster, and adorned with blue veins, which no painter could have imitated. For a while, I feasted my eyes, upon this unexpected prospect; but, when the girl perceived her bosom thus exposed, it is hardly possible to describe her confusion. In the mean time, it was worth observing that, though her companion saw the accident, he only gazed silently, without endeavouring to take the least advantage of her situation.

Though I did not say a word to Mr. Ambler, and he sat very quiet all the time, yet he noticed what had passed; and when the young female had adjusted her neck, whispered in my ear, in order to ask me, whether I did not prefer what I had seen now, to all the flaming females that had presented themselves to us in Covent-garden and its environs? I most heartily answered in the affirmative, still keeping my eyes upon the rural beauty who, by this time, the room being pretty clear of company, was prevailed on, by her sweetheart, to sing; when she obliged him with that most beautiful ballad, "I do as I will with my swain"—We were enchanted with the melody of her voice, which surpassed the symmetry of her person. Mr. Ambler could not help observing, that though he was by no means surprised to see a handsome country wench; yet it was rather uncommon to see one so delicate;

112 A RURAL BEAUTY.

and, above all, to hear her sing with such sweetness and propriety : in observing on her person, the following stanza, in a little elegant poem, came into my mind :

“ The softest blush that nature spreads,
 “ Gave colour to her cheek ;
 “ Such orient tints as drawn thro’ Heav’n,
 “ When May’s blest mornings break.”

My fancy was so deeply impressed with these lines, that, without knowing it, I repeated them aloud ; on which the rural beauty, who perceived my eyes fixed upon her, blushed with a deeper glow, and gently touching her sweetheart, he took the hint, and retired with her into a more distant box, which was just now left empty ; at the same time, the landlord, a jolly man, with a great deal of good-nature, approached me, and asked whether my friend and I would not walk up-stairs, where we might be more conveniently accommodated. As the matter was quite indifferent to us, we followed him, imagining he was going to shew us into an empty room ; but what was our surprise, when, on the contrary, he softly opened the door of an apartment well illuminated, wherein were a great number of youths, one of whom he beckoned to come to him, saying, “ Harry, get these gentlemen a seat ; perhaps they may become members.—Sir, (said he), to me, this is my son, and though I say it, as pretty a performer as the best of them ; last night was our quarterly meeting ; so that, what with settling the accounts of the society, and other matters of consequence, it was late before we proceeded to *business*. You are come at the latter end of the feast, as the saying is ; yet, perhaps, you

you may find some entertainment." While he was making this observation, we took a survey of the place, and at the first glance perceived we were introduced to what is called

A S P O U T I N G C L U B,

Where young people generally resort, some for amusement, and some with a view of qualifying themselves for the stage: the latter however (as Mr. Ambler observed) seldom accomplish their designs; on the other hand they are apt to acquire ill habits, of which they must break themselves before they can ever be admitted to perform at the theatres royal.

After an interval of a few minutes, during which two of the members, whom Mr. Harry said were esteemed quite *capital*, made their appearance in the characters of Tamerlane and Bajazet, in the scene where the latter is brought in chains before the victor. We were indeed in one sense *entertained* with this performance, which was as great a burlesque on *tragedy* as if it had been intended to answer that purpose.

Omar forgot his message, and after going back to fetch it, could scarcely deliver it so as to be understood. It seems the Tartar was a *Grecian*, i. e. an Irishman; but the two sultans were both of our own growth. As to Bajazet, he sometimes repeated inwardly with a sort of grumbling, as if he had been muttering a wayward spell; at other times he tore the passion to rags; and when he addressed Tamerlane in those words, which should be uttered with supreme contempt,

" Make thy demands to those that own thy

" pow'r ;"

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114 ROMEO AND JULIET.

he clinched his fist, which he shook full in the face of the conquering Tartar, who was obliged to take this insult patiently, though he had a monstrous large sabre by his side, and all his guards attending.

Tamerlane was very tame when he demanded,

“ ——— Where slept the thunder
“ That should have arm'd this idol deity?”

but put himself into a violent passion when he repeated the cool philosophic remark,

“ Causeless to hate, is not of human kind.”

As to the concluding lines of the act,

“ Above the worthless trophies man can raise,
“ And with herself, herself the goddess pays:”

These beautiful verses he recited with the tone of a school boy, giving every word a false emphasis, and went off, sawing the air with his hands. At his exit he received a thundering clap from the company.

Romeo and Juliet next made their appearance, but such a *matchless* pair I never saw. Romeo was frequently asleep, till Juliet awaked him by the affected violence of her love, when he threw himself into some very unnatural attitudes, and ranted away, in order to make amends for his former apathy.

After this scene, Lothario and Horatio made their appearance, the former of which committed a barbarous murder upon the character which he pretended to represent. Repeating the following
line

line with the most improper emphasis, he expressed himself thus,

“ Ha! dost thou know ME, that *I am* Lothario?”

“ To be sure (said a young fellow, who sat near the stage, as it was called) I never saw you before—and that *you* are Lothario, I must beg your pardon, when I observe, that I should never have suspected even that you were his representative, but that you have been so obliging to tell us so.”

The hero stopping short while the person above mentioned made this pertinent remark, only said, “ D—n you, sir, you shall be remembered for this interruption;” and then went on with his massacre till he got a hearty cuff from a bloated Horatio, and two or three thrusts in the stomach from Altamont, after which he died most triumphantly, without any signs of regret for the murder he had committed.

A scene in Macbeth next claimed our attention, in which the Scotch tyrant spoke the west-country dialect so strong, and was otherwise so disagreeable, that (being a new performer) he was hissed by the majority of the audience.

The plaintive Monimia, and the boisterous Polydore, were the next who favoured us with an exhibition. Monimia had got her lesson tolerably perfect, but repeated it like a charity child. Polydore was for ever out, and besides had such an impediment in his speech, and an appearance so unpromising, that he received several marks of disapprobation.

The son of our landlord was now given to understand that *his* scene was coming on. This made

made us give great attention : and it seemed that the members thought him of consequence ; for the curtain was dropped during the space of some minutes, and at length Pierre and Jaffier opened upon us. As to Pierre, he was really very decent, and but for some unnatural pauses, might have passed for a tolerable actor. Jaffier was performed by our new friend, Mr. Harry ; but I was sorry to see that the youth had mistaken his talents, and instead of appearing the tender, injured person, loaded with misfortunes, he strove to vie with Pierre in boldness and exertion, and thus perverted the very meaning of the part ; yet he received unmerited applauses, some of which were possibly bestowed on him merely out of a compliment to the landlord his father.

The tragical part of the work being thus happily over, we had a few scenes in comedy, the Wonder especially, not so much mangled ; and others in farces tolerably well performed. In the latter line Mr. Harry did not appear to any disadvantage : he played Sharp in the Lying Valet with a great deal of humour, and some judgment, and came off with the plaudits of the company. The young woman that performed the part of Violante in the Wonder, was much remarked by my friend, who seemed to have forgot his rural beauty, in order to fix his eyes upon her.

The entertainments for the evening being now concluded, at near six in the morning, I thought of departing, when Mr. Ambler went forward to the stage, and took the liberty of following the fair Violante into the dressing-room. In the mean time the gallant, gay Lotherio, having quitted his stage dress, came up to the landlord, and demanded, in a peremptory

tory audient, who it was that had affronted him? Before the person to whom he applied could give an answer, the aggressor stood forth, and declared he was the man that had interrupted the gentleman; but he could not think any sensible man could be angry at receiving an indication of his inabilities in a line he was not bred to. "You may be a very worthy man, sir (added he) but I profess I think you a very bad player. However, if I have hurt your feelings in any respect, I am very sorry for it." The stage hero not relishing this calm and sensible address, began blustering aloud, "You se——I (says he) how durst you interrupt any one?" "I paid my money (replied the other) and had a consequent right to give my opinion in any way I chose."

"You are a liar," cried the spouter, and made a blow at him with a stick he had in his hand; but the other evading the stroke, returned it, and brought him to the ground. When he arose, he was in a more pacific disposition, and having experienced the force of his adversary, was inclined to be *satisfied*. Our host also interposing his good offices, peace was restored, and I was about to depart, when I missed my friend; but just at this instant Mr. Harry came to me, and whispered in my ear that he waited for me in an adjacent room.

On my obeying the summons, I was conducted into a little chamber behind the scene of action, where I found my companion conveniently seated with the young female just mentioned, and another sister of the buskin and the sock, of a more advanced age, who seemed to keep a watchful eye over her. Mr. Ambler's curiosity having by this time led him to inquire
into

118 History of a STROLLING ACTRESS.

into the birth and connexion of this young Thalia, and the old lady being withdrawn, I arrived just in time to hear the following account, which she delivered with great volubility.

“ I have already mentioned that I was born in London, as were my parents, whom misfortunes had first forced to leave the metropolis. Something of what I thought I have told you, that I had conceived a passion for a young gentleman, whose relations disapproving of our intended connexion, sent him abroad to prevent its taking place. I cannot say I was desperately enamoured of him, but this gave me the first idea of love, whose bitter-sweet I afterwards so sensibly experienced. Whilst I was in all the tenderness consequent to a former disappointment, that had awakened desires to which I really was before a stranger, a youth, who was the son of a London tradesman, and whose father lived in great repute, addressed me. He won my heart, and made me *feel* what before I only fancied—I loved him; I could not deny him any thing: I made a sacrifice of my peace to him, and set off with him to the capital. For some time we lived happy together, at least in appearance. But my lover proved an extravagant person, and besides, he for a long time delayed the performance of his promise of marriage. At last, however, finding I was with child, he complied with my earnest solicitations, and we were united. Though we could never bring about a reconciliation with my friends, yet this was effected with his father, who came to see us in town, and promised his son, that if he would live a regular life now he was married, he would not be forgetful of him. But my unfortunate husband followed the paths of dissipation, till he
intirely

intirely lost the affections of his parent who vowed never to assist him in his life time nor to leave him a shilling at his death ; though he was so considerate as to offer me a provision if I would quit him and return into the country ; yet I could not think of separating myself from the man I loved. He was dear to me with all his faults, and I resolved to follow his fortunes. They soon became desperate, and after having parted with every thing of value about us, my husband at last found himself obliged to abscond, for fear of his creditors. For some time we lived in the outskirts of the town in great wretchedness. During this interval, the old gentleman died, and cut off his son as he had promised. My refusal to comply with his demands had irritated him against me ; nevertheless he left me an annuity of fifteen pounds a year, but even this trifle was secured in such a manner that Mr. B ——— could not touch it. It was barely to subsist me in a scanty manner ; but he had his share of this poor pittance as fast as I received it.

It was a happiness for us that we had no children, and this being the case, I proposed to go to service as I could not get any employment in needlework or any thing that I understood. But Mr. B ——— was not pleased with this proposal : He would have been well enough contented for me to do any thing at home, but to go to service he thought was degrading, and declared that if I adopted this method he would never speak to me more. As nothing but necessity could have made me think of putting myself in such a situation as must disjoin me for a time from my husband, so when he expressed his disapprobation, I was easily dissuaded from my intention.—At the same time I could not be insensible to the disagreeable situation

tion in which we were, and which every day grew worse and worse, so that we must have perished, had it not been for the little allowance before-mentioned.

Just at this time my husband having ventured to Covent Garden, going into the Black Lion in Ruffel-street, heard of a manager in the country who wished to engage some players for the summer season.—Though not very well qualified for this profession, he determined to engage himself and me likewise, even before he had consulted me. However on being acquainted with what he had done, I readily acquiesced, for as it concerned myself at the same time that he should chuse a situation so little suited to him. For my own part I had been early in life much acquainted with plays and poetry, and accustomed to repeat verses from tragedy and lines from comedy, and therefore made no doubt but that time and practice would perfect me. I was not deceived; for on our arrival in the country, I was received with pleasure and applause; but Mr. B—— made a very slow progress in the theatrical way.—It was not long after, however, that he died, but not before he had greatly estranged my affections from him, by going after other women, and being guilty of every excess that it was possible for him to run into.

We had had tolerable success in the first Company we chanced to light upon, but soon after my husband's death the manager decamped on account of former Debts, and this company being broken up I had another to seek for. Being once more single, I was left to make my choice; but the line of life which I had taken pleased me, on the one hand, while, on the other, if I had been disposed

disposed to quit it, I should have found it a difficult matter.

" Thus circumstanced, I engaged with Mr. S——, the manager of a company in the county of Essex;—he promised me great things, observing, that his was the best company that travelled the country;—I gladly engaged myself to him; but soon found that the manager had deceived me, and we had no success.

" But, just at this time, one evening, while I was performing the part of Clarinda, in the *Suspicious Husband*, I was saluted with abundance of apples and oranges from the pit;—I was not a little surprised at this unexpected attack; however, as there were no hisses, nor any other marks of disapprobation but this pelting, after dropping two or three curtsies, I ventured to go on;—but this treatment was repeated, till a young man, who entered just at that time, took up the cause; and having selected the person who gave the affront, they both went out together. Some fatal consequences were expected; the audience rose in an uproar, insisting on their money being returned; and the manager immediately discharged me, because I had been the innocent cause of this confusion. The next morning, whilst I was at breakfast, a stranger visited me, who told me he had entered into a severe contest with the person who had pelted me, which was near ending in a battle; but, on coming to an *eclaircissement*, (said he) I found that this very gentleman was a relation of your mother's, who could not endure to see you in such a situation. As to myself, I have long observed you; and as I satisfied him, so I now tell you, Madam, that if you chuse to accept my hand, without a long parade of court-

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ship,

ship, I will make it unnecessary for you to tread the stage; and it is well known, that I am able to provide for you. After a reasonable time allowed for consideration, I agreed to the proposal; and, within a month, we were united, my relation giving me away, and promising to befriend us for the future. But, as accident had generally disconcerted my plans; so accident deprived me of this my second husband, who was drowned the very next summer, as he was bathing; and I was again left a widow. It is generally said that people cannot love twice; but my last spouse well deserved my affections, and, at his death, left me 1000*l.* with which I purchased an annuity; that I still possess, and, as he had advised, shall never tread the stage again, except as you have seen me this evening, merely for a matter of diversion. The person who withdrew, when you entered, is my late husband's kinswoman."

We were well pleased with the lady's account; but I could not help saying, that I wondered at the freedoms she seemed to allow both in words and in actions. Mr. Ambler, however, observed, it was so customary with people introduced into this line, that this circumstance alone, might well account for her conduct. We now proceeded along Oxford-road, formerly called Tyburn-road, and, under a new name, accommodated with a new pavement; and having several squares on either side, which, fifty years ago, were mere dunghills. In particular, my friend made me observe

PORTMAN SQUARE

On our left hand;—to which we advanced, for the sake of taking, as my friend remarked, the sweet air;

air, which, as the wind subsided, had become very agreeable. The sun rose upon us as we reached this unfinished pile of buildings.— Not far from hence in a right line of direction, my friend told me was

CAVENDISH-SQUARE,

Where some very elegant houses were erected. At Marybone, says Mr. Ambler, the fields are mostly built over, but the streets have been ill planned and many of them worse executed. Besides London being very expensive, it is a doubt whether these are real improvements.— But as all is silent here, we will cross again, and without further visiting Marybone, we will proceed towards the regions which we left at

HYDE PARK CORNER.

Accordingly we crossed and passed through some spacious streets till we came to

GROSVENOR-SQUARE,

Which, as he said, when a child, he remembered to be a mere waste ground.— “Here are now, said he, several elegant piles of buildings, as you see; and, in my opinion, it was a better plan to erect them here, than to extend London so far to the northward as Marybone. Yet, at the very extremity of that place, once a town of itself, we find a square is building, of which the people entertain very flattering ideas.”

As Mr. Ambler had promised himself, we had received the benefit of the morning air from the fields, and it was now broad day-light; when, not forgetful of his promise, he repeated that he would take me home, where I should have a convenient apartment ’till I could suit myself, in the course of the week, with a lodging.

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As I had already accepted the offer, I made no farther ceremony, but accompanied him down Bond-street to Piccadilly, 'till we came to the Green-Park coffee-house, the very spot where we had first met.

"And now, said my companion, we have completed, in less than twenty-four hours, the whole circuit of this capital, without being fleeced of our money, intoxicated with liquor, or apparently hurt in our constitutions.—In our tour, we have been witnesses to many of the vices and follies practised here, at the same time that we have seen several things worthy of our attention. Though our journey was performed in a short space of time, yet it was such as might well prove instructive, were it communicated to the unguarded youth of both sexes, who, as the gentleman, (my, near relation), that introduced you to me, observes, often fall into evil, because they are not warned of snares and temptations."

As I thought Mr. Ambler perfectly right in his remark, after going home with him to take a repose that was sweetened by toil, I no sooner arose in the morning, than I determined to commit to paper, a sketch of my tour. I was told, indeed, that there were old books of this nature; but, as I was also informed that they were all defective, their contents being intirely obsolete, and by no means a picture of London, as it appears, at *this time*, I set to work; and, within a little time, put my design into execution; from which, if the reader can reap any real pleasure and solid instruction, it will afford a sensible satisfaction to

THE AUTHOR.

